

**GETTING *INTO* EUROPE: IDENTIFICATION, PREJUDICE
AND POLITICS IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL CULTURE**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BNP. British National Party

EC. European Community

ECSC. European Coal and Steel Community

EEC. European Economic Community

EEIG. European Economic Interest Group

EP. European Parliament

EU. European Union

FA. (National) Football Association

FIFA. Fédération Internationale de Football Association

IMO. ‘In my opinion’ (popular e-zine shorthand discourse).

NF. National Front

UEFA. Union of European Football Associations

UKIP. United Kingdom Independence Party

Introduction: Getting into Europe

This book is an investigation into the identifications and stories told by football supporters about some ill-defined entity called 'Europe'. The title is inspired by the often heard phrase that successful English football teams are aiming to 'get into Europe', when they are actually seeking qualification to UEFA club competition. The core interest is therefore to consider whether the experiences of football fandom (and the ways in which these are recounted) may be developing identifications with Europe and whether this may legitimate the EU or assist in reducing intra-European xenophobia.

This research is concerned with the consumption of football in English and European competitions, with more than one eye on fan perceptions of transnational developments in the sport and its possible socio-political resonance. Fan discourses are extremely important given that close to 13 million people walked through the turnstiles to watch Premier League (the highest division in English professional football) in 2005/6 season. Hundreds of millions of other fans watched the same games on television across the globe, to such an extent that television companies are prepared to pay £2.7bn for three seasons worth of Premiership games (*BBC News* 2007). However, the research is also centrally interested in the development of European identities, particularly in respect to the way 'Europe' is consumed. It is concerned with the tensions of discourses which, on the one hand, present Europe as abstract and almost ill-definable and, on the other, with a Europe situated within everyday lived practices. So, this book is about both sport and Europe, which are two

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social issues of great social magnitude and in this book the voices of football fans – those that propel the sport to such levels - are heard.

Rationale for Research

On 26th May 2005 an open-top bus containing Liverpool football club's players paraded the Champions League trophy around the streets of the city. It was supported by (an estimated) 750,000 ecstatic supporters. Many of these still seemed to be in disbelief that Liverpool had regained the crown of 'European champions' the night before. This was partially due to the unpredictable nature of the final, in which their team had trailed the Italian outfit AC Milan by three goals at half-time before eventually 'clawing' their way back into the match and winning the trophy after a penalty shoot-out. The area around the famous, old St. George's Hall was particularly packed, with around 300,000 people crammed in. I was amongst that crowd and at that moment, the importance of football to those that were present was very obvious. Viewing their team as 'European champions' was a clear way in which a Liverpool football club fan identity became even more subjectively significant.

The same night, *BBC's* political debate programme *Question Time* was broadcast. Earlier that week, the French and Dutch publics had rejected a draft of a European constitution via a referendum. Given the topical nature of the show, debate around this took precedence over other issues. It seemed as if all questions could be ultimately reduced to a question of 'Why do Europeans not appear to feel "European"?' Everybody had an opinion of why *Europe* apparently did not work, but there was no convincing or obvious answer. The final question came from a viewer who emailed the (paraphrased) question: 'With Liverpool winning the Champions

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League, what do the panel think about the impact of football on Europe?' The host, David Dimbleby, asked the question but also half-dismissed it as trivial. Comedian, Eddie Izzard and Minister for Europe, Douglas Alexander, both advocates of a deeper European integration movement gave the following answers:

I do think that European football is a very useful way of gaining a sense of Europe, because you've got French players and German players and so on, all playing on the same team, and we realise that we are all basically culturally alike.

Eddie Izzard, *Question Time, BBC One, 26th May 2005.*

What it does show is an absolute lack of contradiction [between the EU and the nation-state] because you have people who follow England and watch their club in Europe.

Douglas Alexander, Minister for Europe *Question Time, BBC One, 26th May 2005.*

Although Izzard's public role as a comedian may threaten the validity of his comments, the answers that both he and Alexander gave bear sufficient relevance to this book to merit a level of discussion. Indeed, so is the way that Dimbleby dismissed the political capacity of sport (in this case football in Europe). Essentially, Izzard argues that an elite football team offered the potential to act as a metaphor to the wider society, in so far as it shows that Europeans – irrespective of national boundaries – could successfully work together to achieve a common goal and overcome cultural differences. Indeed, as will be addressed in Chapter One, cosmopolitanism presents one way of conceptualising a European identification. On the other hand, Alexander imparts a second dimension of a European identification, by arguing that the EU and its member states can co-exist, without endangering the legitimacy of each other. Although only facilitating a discussion, rather than actively contributing to the debate, Dimbleby's actions certainly hint at a belief that sport does

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not contain a great deal of socio-political value. Indeed, in many respects, Dimbleby's actions were reminiscent of the writings of Theodor Adorno (1982; with Max Horkheimer 1992 [1944]), Noam Chomsky (1983) and Umberto Eco (1986) who each argued, to differing extents, that sport helped to develop false ideologies. Each thinker argues that sport, like much of popular culture, is a frivolous activity which both reinforces the inequalities of the capitalist system and weakens the maturity of critical thought.

Ideological Criticisms of Sport

At the heart of Adorno's (1982) critique are two defining principles: participant competition and the consumption of the sporting spectacle. He argues that sport emits dangerous social messages, which resonate with the sports-playing proletariat. He believes that sport is tied to 'instrumental reason', meaning that it serves a purpose of habituating those in sub-ordinate social positions to the demands of material life. Therefore, Adorno's indictment is specifically aimed at the means-end rationality of bourgeois society. He suggests that sport gives the message that if the player worked/trained hard s/he will have more success. Adorno's (1982) issue is, of course, principally levelled at the wider capitalist society, but a similar message is manipulated, namely that if the proletariat worked hard he/she will gain rewards (i.e. sports victories). Adorno further sees the intrinsic value of sport as permitting competition between members of the same social class who will risk physically damaging themselves, or each other, during participation. Adorno (1982) suggests that this is a dystopian reality: members of the oppressed class should be galvanising against the inherent power structures rather than indulging in masochism. Therefore, Adorno argues that sport creates a false ideology in which instrumental reason is

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central and carries a strong capitalist work ethic which serves to hide the 'real' bourgeois enemy (Adorno 1982; Adorno and Horkheimer 1992 [1944]).

However, the ideology that sport creates moves beyond just athletes. Adorno sees that spectators offered remuneration for the privilege of watching competitive sport. Thus, Adorno and Horkheimer argue that sport, like much of popular culture, is part of the *Culture Industry* (1992 [1944]). They argued that sport is owned by members of the bourgeois but uncritically consumed by the proletariat masses. Adorno and Horkheimer took the view that popular culture may numb the working class's potential to uncover social inequalities and argue that the differences between the Nazi party's ideological propaganda and key agents within popular culture (including sport, music, cinema and newsprint) are minimal. Indeed, Adorno and Horkheimer (1992 [1944]) think that popular cultural forms and Nazi propaganda are alike in lulling cultural consumers into a false sense of security and in the process removing their abilities to think critically. Essentially, the ideological message which is manipulated is that as long as the pre-occupied proletariat had access to popular culture, they will not challenge the existing power structures.

Furthermore, the bourgeois owners of the cultural industries charge fees for the pleasure of consuming a unit of their product. Inevitably, like any profit making activity, this creates surplus value. Therefore, popular culture –including sport - pacifies the proletariat whilst producing a profit for the bourgeois. Indeed, Umberto Eco (1984) voiced similar opinion by asking if it is 'possible to have a revolution on a football Sunday?' (Eco 1986: 172). He answers his own question with a resounding 'no'. Like Adorno and Horkheimer (1992 [1944]), Eco thinks that sport – in this case

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football – negates the proletariat’s ability to think and act critically. A revolution will never happen on a football Sunday because people are far too busy thinking about match-day results to overthrow the government.

Noam Chomsky has only a slightly more favourable opinion about sport. He argues that it represents *everyday* citizens’ abilities to think politically, but because of it, they choose not to. He makes this claim with specific reference to radio phone-ins, by arguing that when callers talk about ‘international affairs or domestic problems, it's at a level of superficiality that's beyond belief’ (Chomsky 1983: 23). However, during sport phone-ins, he observes that the level of conversation is raised:

People call in and have long and intricate discussions, and it's plain that quite a high degree of thought and analysis is going into that. People know a tremendous amount. They know all sorts of complicated details and enter into far-reaching discussion about whether the coach made the right decision yesterday and so on. These are ordinary people, not professionals, who are applying their intelligence and analytic skills in these areas and accumulating quite a lot of knowledge and, for all I know, understanding.

Chomsky (1983: 23)

Chomsky argues that sports fans have in-depth knowledge about sport and frequently demonstrate this aptitude. Significantly, he believes that this is in far greater depth than the interested lay-person’s knowledge of political affairs. What is more, he argues that sport allows fans to be ‘not at all in awe of the experts – which is a little unusual’ (Chomsky 2004: 99) because they critically question the assumptions of ‘specialists’ such as well-informed journalists and (former) professional sports people, in a way that *everyday* people interested in politics will not with ‘current affairs experts’. So, sport shows that individuals can critically think about complex authority and power structures but choose to allocate cognitive processes to activities such as football fandom rather than, for instance, the government or other political actions.

Research Aim and Objectives

Essentially, Adorno (1982, with Horkheimer 1992 [1944]), Eco (1986) and Chomsky (1983) all agree that sport impinges upon the capacity for public critical thought about politics. This dismissal of sport seemed a little unfair as the idea that sport reduces political awareness seemed to be assumed *a priori*. This is especially the case after Eco (1986: 167) admitted 'I don't love football because football never loved me', which suggests that there may be personal issues shaping his political problems with sport (see Mills 1959). This book begins to empirically investigate this broad relationship by looking at the possible connection between sport and European identifications (which may have a political core). Although it is essential to recognise that Adorno (1982, with Horkheimer 1992 [1944]) and Eco (1986) specifically refer to the connection between the capitalist mode of production and passive sport cultures, a valid way of interpreting their arguments may be to read them as suggesting that leisure activities hinder supporters' thought processes about political issues, such as the widening/enlarging EU. Therefore, applying these ideas, my research question is:

- *To consider whether the experiences related to football fandom may help to develop identifications with various definitions of 'Europe'.*

This does not mean that if football helps to produce a European identification, the ideological criticisms can be dismissed. Indeed, if a European identification is being built through the consumption of trans-European football activities, it could be equally argued that sports competitions have seduced fans into believing they are

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'European'. Therefore to help to operationalise this research question the book aims to:

- I. Consider if football fans are identifying with the culturally specific idea of Europe;*
- II. Explore whether other manifestations of European identifications – such as those in political discourse – emerge from football fandom;*
- III. Ascertain whether intra-European xenophobia exists in English football supporter culture;*
- IV. Think about how European identifications which emanate from football 'fit' with territorial identifications i.e. national and local identifications, and,*
- V. Investigate the European-themed attitudinal differences, if there are any, between fans of 'big' and 'small' clubs.*

These objectives are important when considering the relationship between European identities/identifications and the consumptive activities which emanate from some forms of football fandom. The first two objectives reflect the debate about whether some football supporters identify with a definition of Europe (seen in terms of trans-European football club competition) and then, whether this is obviously transfers into any identification with political definitions of Europe. The third objective draws upon another conception of Europe, through commonalities between its citizens (irrespective of national boundaries) to question whether, in the domain of football, xenophobic fan attitudes exist towards non-British football players.

The fourth objective refers to Alexander's argument, namely that European identifications develop through national cultures. The 'nested identities' perspective

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is popular in both the social and political sciences but needs further examination in the field of football, especially given the findings in Anthony King's *The European Ritual* (2003). In this text, King argues that Manchester United fans were interested in *Europe* but rejected English national identifications. Finally, addressing the fifth objective, King argues that European consciousnesses are only developed by fans of 'European superclubs'. With respect to a relatively small group of Manchester United supporters, King's argument is substantiated but there are sufficient gaps in the sparse literature on football and Europeanisation to develop original claims in this book.

Original contribution of the book

The majority of King's fieldwork was based upon Manchester United fans; this opens questions about the extent to which his findings can be generalised to other supporters of other clubs. Hence the first contribution of this study is that King's theories are tested by examining Liverpool supporters' attitudes given that their team can easily be considered to be a second English 'superclub' (who regularly qualify for the Champions League). Second, there is a clear need to also consider whether the same processes operate upon Oldham Athletic supporters, given that, unlike Manchester United (and Liverpool), they are unlikely to be considered an elite European football team. Hence, the principle contribution of the book is that it tests King's theories about supporter consciousnesses/identifications on two other English football clubs. Moving away from direct theory-testing, a further original contribution is laid out in Chapter Four's framing methods, which Jens Rydgren (2003; 2004) initially developed to look at 'commonsense' xenophobic discourse espoused by the European far-Right. Here, these frames are re-appropriated into the context of the language

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used by football fans to look at how this may or may not reflect notions of European and cosmopolitan identifications in sport.

Structure of the book

To help answer the research objectives and produce an original contribution, the book is split into three parts and six main chapters plus an Introduction and Conclusion.

Chapter One is a critical literature review, which describes existing research in areas of importance to this project. Such themes include considering how Europe is defined, what a European identification is, 'official' attempts and societal processes that have helped to develop *European identifications* and the significance of sport in building/deepening such cultures.

Chapter Two details the methodology and the methods utilised in this research. This chapter considers the problems that researchers face in capturing *collective identities/identifications* and looks at how these may be overcome. As e-zine comments are used as the data source, the *types* of football supporters who visit these websites are theoretically discussed and the advantages and disadvantages of using Internet messageboard material as a primary source are weighed up. The use of frame analysis, which was the chosen method of analysis, is described and critiqued. This chapter concludes Part I of the book.

Part II covers the results and discussion chapters. Chapter Three is the first in this section and considers if football fans are developing *European identifications* based around a football-generated perception of *Europe*. This chapter explicitly helps to

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address the first research objective. The argument in this chapter is that Liverpool supporters show signs of weak European identifications, developed principally through European fan travel. On the other hand, Oldham Athletic supporters display strong national identifications, often expressed through support for the English national football team. Generally, Liverpool fans do not champion the English national team and reject multiple manifestations of *Englishness*. There are a number of reasons (frames) which contribute to this, but the most common is that they reject English nationhood because they see the nation as 'othering' the city of Liverpool and its inhabitants. As such, strong local identifications are formed.

Chapter Four is the second results chapter. This chapter considers the presence of intra-European xenophobia in the context of the football transfer market. This is vital to understanding the potential Europeanisation of English supporter culture because it provides a clear example of how non-British people may be accepted into British and English cultures and reflects the third research objective. The results of this chapter are particularly interesting given that both sets of fans showed the potential to voice xenophobic attitudes but in qualitatively different ways (using different frames) and at different times during the research.

The second research objective is addressed in Chapter Five by questioning whether European football cultures could have a directly political output, such as legitimising the European integration movement. In many ways this chapter addresses the question asked by Dimpleby and the answers offered by Alexander and Izzard on *Question Time*. The results in this chapter demonstrate that, at least on a football

messageboard, Oldham Athletic supporters seem to discuss political manifestations of Europe more readily than Liverpool fans. Part III begins with Chapter Six, which draws together the three results chapters and argues that while football can produce a football-centred form of European identification, it cannot answer socio-political concerns such as reducing xenophobia or providing legitimacy for a deeper (or wider) EU. The theories of Manuel Castells (2000 [1996]; 2004 [1997]; 1998) and Zygmunt Bauman (1998; 2000; 2001; 2004; 2005) are pivotal in this understanding. The work of the former in the first two books of the *Information Age* trilogy has consistently helped to shape ideas in this dissertation. Indeed, it is interesting to recount that during the third book of the trilogy, Castells (1998) mentions the significance of football in the contemporary European 'network society'. In some ways this project aims to test the truth in this statement.

The concluding chapter sums up the book by directly answering the research question and demonstrating how the objectives have been dealt with. It has already been explained how I, II and III will be answered, but the final two objectives are gathered throughout the three research chapters and are different according to particular socio/political/cultural circumstance. This chapter will also highlight ideas for future research and detail how my findings may be applicable to other popular cultural contexts.

The next chapter begins Part I of the book by looking at the existing literature to consider what a European identification/identification might be, how it could be developed and the potential role sport may play in this cultural process.

Chapter One

EUROPE, EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATIONS AND FOOTBALL: A LIKELY COMBINATION?

INTRODUCTION

The possible development of a European identification is central to this book. But what is a *European identification*? What forces have created and/or continue to shape it? And how, if at all, is sport in general and football in particular, helping to shape and develop it? To begin to answer these questions, Delanty (2004: 81-2) and Stråth (2002) argue that contemporary socio-political developments such as the 'fall of communism', the unification of Germany, the declining significance of the Second World War and, arguably most important, the growing significance of the EU have made the development of a European culture more likely. However, assuming that a European identification *really* 'exists', how does it impact upon other cultural forms, such as national identity? In this chapter, the existing literature is reviewed to address how European identifications may be developing/may have been developed and the role of football in these potential processes. The chapter begins by considering the various definitions of *Europe* before moving on to discuss the different expressions of European identifications in both football and the wider social world. The second part of the chapter will review the ways in which other researchers have found European identities/identifications – in their various guises – to have developed through, prohibited by, or become manifest in sport.

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WHAT IS 'EUROPE'?

In the 1970s, United States (US) Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger asked: 'If I want to call Europe, who do I call?' (Meek 2004). With this, Kissinger seemed to be referring to the political expression of *Europe*. Yet, *Europe* is more than 27 EU states (Burgess 2002). For instance, if a list of European nations were compiled, Norway, Switzerland, maybe even Turkey and Russia would probably be included. If the person making the list had just watched an international football match, Israel might also be included. Yet, none are EU states. To be clear, there is no single definition of *Europe*, although there are several different ideas which are applicable in particular situations (Hudson 2000; Soysal 2002: 280). This sub-section considers the various ways in which *Europe* is defined, first by looking at its various descriptions, then by considering it in relation to its 'others'.

Definitions of Europe

There are well-documented concerns relating to how Europe is defined as a territorial entity (Bauman 2004a; Iverson 2002; Soysal 2002). Historically, 'the idea' of Europe has been 'confused' by countless wars between European nations (Hobsbawn 1997) and in the contemporary era, *Europe* is often described as the post-World War II integration project. Yet, today's Europe is more than 27 EU states (Stråth 2002). Wallace (2003) has tried to address the confusion over what defines *Europe* by arguing:

The boundaries of Europe are in our heads. 19th century mapmakers, historians writing the 'story of our nation' and of its place in European history, novelists, children's writers, have all contributed to our sense of what it is to be 'European', which countries we regard as 'our' Europe, and where our Europe ends – and the barbarian Asia or Africa, begin. This means that there can be no continent-wide agreement on where Europe ends, or where its centre lies – or what geographical features, values,

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religious beliefs or claimed ethnic origins define the extent and limits of Europe.

Wallace (2003: 7)

Wallace is arguing that there is no standardised definition of *Europe*, which has rather been constructed by multiple sources of culture. Indeed, Lepsius (2001: 205) points out that many cartographers also find *Europe* difficult to define. For instance, he suggests that *Europe* has no clear geographical or historical border; the Russian Empire went well beyond the boundaries of *Europe*, with the Ural Mountains, the Sea of Okhotsk or the Bosphorus Strait not seen as significant enough to define national borders but yet, they are judged to be fit to separate *Europe* from *Asia*. This subsection will begin by looking at how the term *Europe* was derived from the Ancient periods.

According to Delanty (1995; 1995a) the roots of *Europe* come from the description of the Ancient Greek princess, Europa. It is important to note that Europa did not come from either Greece or its northern and western territories, but rather from the east (Lebanon) and had two sisters, Asia and Libya. Princess Europa's most significant role in mythology comes from her relationship with the father of the Greek gods, Zeus. One day Europa was walking along the shoreline with her sisters when Zeus approached them, disguised as a white bull. Zeus kneeled down and offered to take Europa on his back for a short ride. As the unsuspecting Europa mounted the 'bull', he ran into the sea and swam to Crete where, converting to his full incarnation, he seduced Europa. During her life on Crete, Europa had three children with Zeus and became the founder of the Minoan dynasty (see Leontidou 2004: 595-7). This anecdote reveals a number of clues about the relationship between Ancient Greece

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and Europe. First, Princess Europa was not Greek and shows that they defined Europe as an outsider. Indeed, the family ties Europa had with Africa and Asia illustrates that the Ancient Greeks saw the 'sisters' be fairly similar. Second, Europa was the preferred sister, suggesting that Europe was somehow seen as *superior* to its close 'others', Africa and Asia. Furthermore, Weitz (1997: 22) argues that Europa had a distinguishable beauty because of her 'remarkably white complexion [and] ... beautiful eyes'. The description of Europa's skin tone suggests that while the Ancient Greeks described Europa as originating from the Asian Minor, they drew clear links to the paler-skinned people in what would later be known as north-west Europe. This story was also enduring in Roman mythology (Zeus was renamed Jupiter) although according to this version, Europa contemplated suicide after she was abducted and was only persuaded out of this action by the naming of a continent after her (Tokarski *et al.* 2004).

Therefore, like the Greeks, the Ancient Romans did not think of themselves, or call themselves *European*. Yet, many contemporary thinkers equate the foundations of the Roman Empire – in terms of values, culture and boundaries – as the precursor to the modern Europe (Bodei 1995). Indeed, the Romans considered the Celts (UK and Ireland), Germans, Iberians (Southern Spain), Illryians (Balkans), Libyans (African), Berbers (African) and Persians to be outsiders who were defined by comparatively barbaric values (Delanty 1995). The Roman Empire was a 'collar' around the Mediterranean, which Romans called 'Our Sea'. This means that Syria, Palestine and Libya were as much notionally part of the 'European' Roman Empire as Ancient France (Gaul) or Ancient Britain (Britannia). However, if *Europe* is defined by

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current cultural values related to law, language and literature, it can be considered to be derivative of the Roman era (Davies 1996).

Meek (2004) points out that the versions of the geographical term 'Europe' were first regularly displayed on medieval maps which showed a T-shaped drawing of the world centred around three continents – Europe, Africa and Asia – with Jerusalem at the centre. Given the religious connotations to Jerusalem, it is clear Christianity somewhat defined Europe (Bodei 1995; Delanty 1995). For some, this is still the case. Today, the most visible description of *Europe* (especially in news programmes) is the EU. Non-EU countries are allowed to apply for accession, as long as they can display 'European roots'. This invariably means a Christian heritage. However, there are other definitions of Europe which are important to how the territory is understood to many. One such example is *Europe* defined in football terms by UEFA.

UEFA's definition of Europe is of a '51[now 52] nation empire stretching from the southern tip of Spain to the frozen north of Norway, and from south-eastern Turkey to Iceland', thus football's *Europe* 'ends where the Caspian Sea laps against the eastern coast of Azerbaijan, with a tiny pocket nudging the Mediterranean in Israel' (Connelly 2000: 11). Israel's inclusion is notional because FIFA decided that, given the historical, cultural and political tensions in the Middle-East, it would be better if Israel did not compete with Arabic countries. Once again, this suggests that the Jewish Israel state is better placed with the Christian European countries. On the other hand, a second trans-European popular cultural contest, the *Eurovision Song Contest*, which

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Borneman and Fowler (1997) argue helps to conceptualise the European society, interestingly includes Israel amongst its entrants. This may suggest that Israel is being included in some definitions of *Europe*.

An ideological way of defining Europe would be to suggest that Marxism has played a significant role in its development. For instance, In *Das Kapital*, Marx (1976) argued that there was a dual character of work, which was manifest in concrete and abstract labour. He argued that this was the starting point for exploitation, which would ultimately produce a revolution that would destroy capitalist conditions. This has been important when defining Europe because post-World War II state socialist Eastern European nations based their political ideologies upon this theory, until the end of the Cold War in 1989. At the other extreme, the US represented an advanced form of capitalism. However, Rosamund (1999) and Hutton (2002) argue that Western Europe has developed its own financial conditions that are based upon social contracts and are less advanced than US capitalism. Therefore, a way of defining today's Europe would be to say that it is caught between the tensions of 'communism' and 'capitalism' (Hutton 2002). Yet, this definition must be contested because whilst contemporary European conditions are not those of US capitalism, they still adhere to capitalistic ethos of maximum monetary gain – thus in this sense, the third way is clearly just another form of capitalism (Smith 1993).

However, the capitalist space plays a part in facilitating Castells' (1994) notion of a Europe which is formed around large cities:

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[M]ajor cities throughout Europe constitute the nervous system of both the economy and political system of the continent. The more national states fade in their role, the more cities emerge as a driving force in the making of a new European society.

(Castells 1994: 23)

Castells' argument is that with the opening of the European Common Market and the economic ethos behind the European Economic Community (EEC), *Europe* can be defined as a profitable space within which European cities become more significant than nation-states. He argues that this is eroding the role of the nation, both as the key to a European society and the principal economic and regulatory force in the new Europe. This is different to the widespread view which Delanty (2006) articulates, namely that 1648's Treaty of Westphalia (which prevented nation-states from invading each other on the basis of religious beliefs) defines Europe. Once again, this means that *Europe* was defined by different interpretations of Christianity but also that the nation-state was instrumental to any conceptualisation of the continent. The next significant way that *Europe* can be defined is in its relationship to its 'others'.

Europe's 'other'

Baudrillard (1988: 19) calls into question the 'other' as a form of understanding *Europe* by arguing that 'Europe can no longer be understood by starting out from Europe itself'. With this he referred to external processes which help to define it by virtue of *difference*. This helps us to define *Europe* because we know it is distinct from other territories/ideas, such as *Africa*. However, it is fair to ask 'who/what is Europe's other'. There appears to be no universal answer to this question which is highlighted by Delanty's (2004: 82-3) argument that *Europe* has no unambiguous

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other. In the ancient periods, where we are now told that Europe equated to either the Roman or Greek empires in which the 'other' was Islam in general, or 'the Turk' in particular. Therefore, it is reasonable to ask if Islam can continue to be the other from which Europe can be coherently defined. The EU could uphold this definition by choosing accession states on the basis of Christian culture. However, this idea is potentially problematic given that an exclusively Christian Europe could become extremely xenophobic (Castells 1998: 333). Given the EU's cosmopolitan pledge to 'unity in diversity', it is unlikely that many politicians would describe Europe as defined against Islam.

There may be several additional reasons why Islam cannot be considered as Europe's other. First, it is important to point out that Europe is now largely de-secular, with religion no more than a weak belief for many Europeans (Castells 1998: 333). Second, many Muslims are resident or born in Europe; therefore *Europe* is internally Muslim (Crépon 2001). However, Kumar (2004) suggests that this does not adequately rule out Islam as Europe's 'other' because many Christians do not accept European Muslims as *really* European because Islamic culture is difficult to 'assimilate'. Therefore, while Muslims are the largest new migrant population in Europe, cultural divisions may accentuate because of the mutual appeal of retaining difference. Kumar (2004) continues to allude to Europe as Christian by arguing that Muslims have replaced Jews as Europe's 'other'. Habermas and Derrida (2003) disagree with this point by arguing that a contemporary Europe is more likely to be defined by the values of democracy, peace and tolerance. The substance behind their theory is that the protests against the so-called 'war on terror' (2002-2003) showed that many Europeans did not see themselves as opposed to Islamic culture, even if this

value was shown as a by-product to the strong public belief that such conflicts were unjustified, unethical and perhaps, illegal. However, at the same time, Rydgren (2004) shows that Extreme Right Populist (ERP) and Radical Right Populist (RRP) parties have experienced resurgences in European support in the age of multiculturalism. This highlights a number of issues. First, Europe might be defined as a multi-speed culture, in which some members embrace cosmopolitan difference whereas others are more likely to act in exclusionary ways and, second, it is possible that the 'other' does not have to be external, but can come from within. To explain, it is clear that some Muslims *are* European but are still cast as an 'internal other' from which other definitions of Europe can grow. The value of an internal other does not have to be based upon religion or ethnicity but could play a part in the constitution of 'Europe' to some groups, especially given that an argument in Chapter Three is that the perceived threat of trans-European football violence becomes the internal other from which some European-themed Liverpool fan cultures are based (in the light of 1985's Heysel disaster).

Lukes (2003) and Zaretsky (2003) offer a different definition of Europe, namely that it is *not* America. This theory could work on at least two grounds. First, the US is comparable to Europe in that it is a territory, not a religion. This means that whilst it is possible to be, for instance, Irish-American or Italian-American, it is not viable to be European-American. Thus, the two are distinct. Second, America would be at least the equal of Europe in terms of political and economic strength which makes it a likely candidate to be defined as a rival, given that Triandafyllidou (1998: 60) argues that a 'significant other' is always a community which is perceived to pose the biggest threat. The crux of Lukes' and Zaretsky's arguments are alike in that they view the

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contemporary social world as characterised by power, in which 'Europe' (read the EU) and the US battle for global dominance. Hence, *Europe* is *European* because it is not American. However, the way in which two of the most influential global power brokers are defined are different as Lukes argues that 'Europeans put the emphasis on negotiation, diplomacy, and commercial ties, on international law over the use of force, on seduction over coercion, on multilateralism over unilateralism', whilst Americans 'generally favour policies of coercion rather than persuasion, emphasising punitive sanctions over inducements to better behaviour, the stick over the carrot' and 'want problems solved' with 'threats eliminated' (Lukes 2003: 352). Leonard's (2005: 2-19) argument is broadly similar. He suggests that while America is characterised by oppressive, coercive 'hard' global power, Europe develops its position of 'soft' global power through the means of negotiation, democracy and diplomacy.

Morley and Robins (1995) and McNeil (2004) also argue that Europe could be defined by difference to the US, although they prefer to draw upon ideas from American popular culture and lifestyle choices. In this way, America symbolises the European cultural 'fear ... of what it will become' (Morley and Robins 1995: 50). Thus, America is 'gung-ho' and brash, while Europe is civilised and refined (ibid: 82). These statements are unconvincing (I certainly know one or two Europeans who 'act now and think later') and unless there is an underlying force which makes Americans do this (people rather than territories act in particular ways), the assumption alludes to what Rydgren calls 'illegitimate ethno-differences' (see Chapter Four). However, McNeil (2004) and Morley and Robins (1995) argue that this perception of America is gathered by television programmes and other images which

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are screened on European television channels (Morley and Robins 1995: 79). It is significant to note that it is often less important that stereotypes accurately reflect a given society than that people believe them to be fair representations of it (its people). For this reason, their argument is as convincing as any, given that they see *them* in the same way as *we* – as imagined groups.

Europe may be best described as a range of cultural expressions rather than an objective articulation of politics or territory (Delanty 1995; Hobsbawn 1997; Risse 2002) as Lowenthal (2000) argues Europe has always been more of a mental construct than a social entity. Indeed, he argues that Europeans imagine what Europe is from his/her particular standpoint view of the world; this is inextricably flavoured by the nation in which they live or have lived. So, 'the French think of Europe as France writ large, [and] the Germans and Austrians [think of Europe] as Greater Germany' (Lowenthal 2000: 318). Therefore, there are obvious inconsistencies between different Europeans' perceptions of *Europe*. Furthermore, Kumar (2003) argues that this principle is not limited to Europe, as nations are also mental constructs and so citizen often imagine their region to be the essence of the country. This may often be the case, although this identification may not occur because if the region is completely different to the perception of the nation, local people may argue that the nation does not represent them (see Chapters Three and Six).

Cohen's (1985: 12-15) notion of the boundary is also a useful way to conceptualise various definitions of *Europe* and help us to understand it as social construct. The boundary is a crucial part of any collective identification because it marks its

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beginning and end. Thus those who are positioned within the boundary are accepted as members, and those on the exterior are rejected. So, in Europe, the EU has clear boundaries – all citizens of the 27 states belong to Europe - and other countries which lay territorial, historical or cultural claims to be European may be excluded. But this is just one definition. For example, any map of the world shows that Switzerland is territorially hemmed into the centre of Europe, but it is not an EU member. Does this mean Switzerland is not European? As far as the EU is concerned, it clearly is not, but other definitions are likely to include it. This argument can be reapplied to other definitions of Europe. Is Israel in Europe? EU officials would argue that it is not, as would most cartographers (Wallace 2003). However the case becomes fuzzy when it is included in other cultural terms, as discussed earlier in this chapter sub-section. This makes the boundary of Europe imprecise. Therefore, in Cohen's words *Europe* 'operates in the minds' of its 'beholders' (Cohen 1985: 12). *Europe* signifies a social construction which sometimes exists only as a loose label placed upon non-American western organisations. It is clear that definitions of 'Europe' are hugely contested and that there are multiple reference points and manifestations to it. The same could be said about the term 'identity' which, in even its clearest manifestation, can be described as 'slippery'.

UNPACKING 'IDENTITY'

Indeed, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue that the term 'identity' means too much in the social scientists diction. As such, they suggest that when the term is used in its broadest sense, its sheer ambiguity results in it becoming devoid of meaning. Jones and Krzyżanowski (2007) agree by postulating that the term 'identity' is not necessarily the most suitable way of describing an individual's relationship with

social group and call for the term to be 'unpacked'. This section will not aim to provide any groundbreaking new meanings for the term 'identity' but will draw upon Brubaker and Cooper's work to consider some of its many uses before deciding that the type of 'identity' which is under consideration in this book is best described as an 'identification'.

Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 6-8) argue that identity is used in at least five different ways, which sometimes overlap. They suggest that the first of these assumes identity to be the product of non-instrumentalist social action, in so far as it is used to describe the culture of a group who carry out activities in order to understand themselves, rather than to promote self interest. The second meaning of the term suggests 'sameness' within a social group ('we are of the same identity because we share common traits/culture'). They argue that sameness can be both objective (referring to 'sameness' in itself) or subjective (perceived sameness). Sameness thus becomes manifest in solidarity, shared dispositions/consciousness or collective action. The third meaning of identity is tinged with nostalgia in that it describes the notion as a self-hood which can/has been 'lost' but, whenever possible, should be retained. Thus, in this conception, identity becomes something which must be 'saved' from external contemporary forces. The fourth meaning of identity is somewhat in opposition to the third understanding in so far as it does not see identity as hermetically sealed, but as processual and thus open to constant change. This conception sees identities as constantly negotiated and always changing. The final descriptions of identity which Brubaker and Cooper illustrate are identities which they refer to as 'the fragmented nature of self', which stresses that people have a number of character traits and social connections which are reflected by multiple identities.

Brubaker and Cooper's (2000) unpacking is useful in that it allows researchers to think about the assumptions they hold about identity. However, viewed another way, the need to disaggregate such a complicated term runs the risk of artificial simplification and potentially strips 'identity' of some important dimensions. For instance, although the third and fourth meanings they refer to are contradictory in nature, almost all the others are highly compatible with the understanding of identities as multiple. Therefore, from the five theoretical underpinnings of identity, I will assume that identities involve some notion of 'sameness' to others, are processual and multiple. On the issue of multiple identities, this project takes great intellectual influence from Bauman's work on 'fractured identities' which emerges from his writings on 'liquid modernity' (1998; 2000; 2000a; 2004; 2005). In these texts, he argues that the contemporary social world is characterised by consumption, which involves the use and subsequent disposal of a product (see particularly Bauman 2000a; 2004; 2005). This is reflected in a wide social world in which people consume cultural situations, express situated interests and then (sometimes temporarily) dispose of them. These social philosophies become manifest in the way individuals think about themselves and others, which means that living identities are situational and never 'finished' (until the point of death). Therefore, identities often appear fractured and sometimes inconsistent between contexts. Thus, the type of identity which Bauman (2000; 2004; 2005) writes about fits a number of Brubaker and Cooper's different ways of describing identity without any apparent tension between its composite dimensions.

However, Brubaker and Cooper's (2000: 14-21) elaboration of the manifestations and connotations of identity is very useful. When detailing this, they argue that the term 'identity' should be replaced by one of three more specific clusters of meaning. The first substitute term they use is 'identification'. They argue that this lacks 'the reifying connotations of identity' (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 14) in so far as it invites the social scientists to specify the social actors who do the identifying. Whereas the term 'identity' presupposes that identifying will result in internal sameness and bounded culture, identification merely shows a positive acknowledgement without inbuilt assumptions. They also argue that identifications (self and categorisation by others) are contextual and may vary between situations which means that one identification does not necessarily dictate all others; in this sense, identifications share some common positions with Bauman's notion of liquid identities (2000a; 2004). The second identity-substitute which Brubaker and Cooper (2000) offer is 'self-understanding'. They argue that this is a good alternative because it explicitly recognises the subjective nature of identity in that it designates an individual understanding of self which cannot be generalised to others. Thus, self-understandings are individualistic. It is also suggested that this replacement for identity captures its distinctly tacit qualities by recognising that self-understandings are formed through discourse and inform actions (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 18). The third alternative is 'commonality' (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 19-21). They identify a problem with the term identity in that it simultaneously designates both difference and similarity to others. They argue that commonality merely stresses similarities within social groups, promoting 'a feeling of belonging together' (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 20). Jones and Krzyżanowski (2007) build upon this by calling for the term identity to become further nuanced to differentiate between this

and 'belonging' which encompasses the types of identity which are spun from territories. As such, they believe that belonging should be considered as the process whereby an individual feels an association with a group and represents a way to explain a relationship between personal and collective identities.

The unpacking of identity reveals various cultural processes that are extremely useful for this project, and prompts a refinement in the use of the term. Consequently, although 'identity' will be largely retained in the remainder of 'Part I' (because such potential changes of lexicon may contravene academic etiquette) the type of identity which is explored in this book is largely potential football fan identifications with various definitions of Europe. Therefore, the empirical and discussion work in Parts II and III will use the word identification to explain possible cultural relationships, wherever necessary.

A second assumption about identity/identifications is that, although ultimately formed by social actions, they may be heavily influenced by structural forces. In this domain, Castells' (2004 [1997]) influence on this book is clear. His argument is that external forces (such as capitalism, state imposition etc.) potentially create three different cultural outcomes. The first is a 'legitimising identity' which generates a civil society, in that such subjects/social groups approve of external conditions (therefore legitimating them) which allows such conditions to be further strengthened (Castells 2004 [1997]: 8). The second type of identity is more critical and involves a resistance to such conditions. This often forms an impasse as the developing identities are dissenting to the point where the imposed conditions cannot be democratically strengthened but subjects do not actively seek to reverse the effects of the conditions.

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This is the 'resistance identity' (Castells 2004 [1997]: 9). The third type of identity is clearly influenced by Marxist thought, in so far as a group identity forms in which members are so critical of the external conditions that they seek to change them.

Thus, revolutionary action emerges from such 'project identities' (Castells 2004 [1997]: 10). The influence of this in this book is that the group identities formed/developed as response to external conditions are considered (such as football-based revenues, football's international transfer market, national and EU policies and the local presence of some political parties).

Constructed Identities?

Social scientists who research identities, including European identifications, loosely fall into two camps: primordialists and constructivists. Therefore, this section will consider whether European identifications are primordial or constructed expressions.

By arguing that some nations are based upon pre-modern ethnic communities of blood descent and are therefore inherently unique, Smith clearly advocates the primordial theory (Smith 1992; 1993; 1995; 1995a).¹ Therefore, because Europe has multiple ethnic communities, Smith argues that a European identity cannot exist (Smith 1992; 1995a).² If this argument were true, a European identity would have to carry particular ethnic characteristics, such as blonde hair and blue eyes. However, Smith refers to national ethnic groups as 'eastern' nations and argues that the ideas cannot be taken beyond the level of nationalism. Smith's model of 'eastern' nationalism is not

¹ Citizens of these nations are inherently different to 'others' because they are from different lines of blood descent.

² A major problem with Smith's argument is that he fails to acknowledge that once something is constructed, and those who are affected by it begin to believe in its properties, it does not matter if it is not 'real'.

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necessarily wrong, but bears an uncomfortable similarity to Hitler's Arian race argument. This argument is rejected because, as explained in Chapter Two, the approach taken in this research is that social identifications are created through human actions rather than biological traits (which may lack validity).

On the other hand, constructivists argue that there is nothing *intrinsically real* about territorial identifications, which are 'imagined' (Anderson 1991 [1983]) through human creations such as politics and culture. While Anderson may not dispute that there are a number of ethnic nations throughout the world, he argues that the common ties which unite disparate individuals are imagined because:

Members ... will never know most of their fellow members ... yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion

Anderson (1983: 15).

This means that while ethnicities may be social realities, the ties that bind together members of an 'ethnic nation' are entirely imagined because it is highly unlikely that all members of a nation will ever meet. Thus, 'ethnic nations', like all large scale communities, are in some way *imagined*. However, to explain the ways in which these are imagined, two manifestations of European identifications in the existing literature will be considered. These are, first, the idea that a European identification is an imagined association with a particular definition of Europe and, second, that a European identification is an articulation of cosmopolitan values.

Identifying with an idea of Europe

The first form of European identification refers to those human cultures which embrace, to the point of identifying with, a definition of Europe. This type of

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identification will not be overly elaborated here, because it is essentially those customs which legitimate one or more of the definitions of Europe which were earlier considered. Exemplifying this characteristic, Grundy and Jamieson (2005) argue that a European identification (although they use the term 'European identity' to refer to this) is a 'pro-supranational feeling towards Europe', in which *Europe* may be viewed as 'the European Union; the Euro; geography; values and traditions' (Grundy and Jamieson 2005: 7.2). Viewed in this way, anyone who holds positive associations with these forms of *Europe* is developing a European identification, which as discussed earlier in this section, constitutes one form of identity. This form of cultural classification is also manifest in Bruter's studies, in which he argues that European identifications are the warm relations individuals feel toward any aspect of contemporary Europe (Bruter 2003; 2004; 2004a). The second description of European identifications comes less from positive associations to a definition of Europe but is more closely related to a common 'we' feeling which emerges amongst Europeans, irrespective of nationality (see Castano 2004). This will be referred to as a cosmopolitan European identification.

Cosmopolitan values

Before beginning this subsection, it should be made clear that a definition of cosmopolitanism will not be given as this is recognised to be a slippery and contested term (Delanty 2003a; Calhoun 2003; Zolo 1997). However, it seems as if there are at least two distinct varieties of the cosmopolitan condition. These need to be differentiated. First, there are those who see cosmopolitanism rights as principally

located in the cultural sphere, such as football and other *everyday* practices.³ The key concerns for this group include processes and experiences of cultural diversity, hybridisation and communication within and between national societies. Second, there are the Kantian cosmopolitans, who have greater concerns with the way legal and political ideals have developed beyond the boundaries of the nation-state.⁴ The common theme is the concern with an allegiance to a world community of humankind and this is usually defined in contrast to exclusionary prejudices such as nationalism and xenophobia (Delanty and O'Mahony 2002: 146).⁵

Xenophobia can be considered to be the opposite of cosmopolitanism, given that it refers to the fear of 'others'. Recently, there has been much debate over whether xenophobia and racism are the same prejudice. Favell and Tambini (1995: 148-63) argue that the two are distinct because the notion of 'race' is not just socially constructed, whilst Miles (2003 [1989]) recognises this but suggests that racism traditionally referred to an ideology that claimed fundamental, biologically-defined differences exist. However, he argued that prejudices which emanated from this belief lost much of their influence after World War II, given the beliefs of Nazism are now widely rejected. Yet, in the contemporary period a new form of racism which is based upon insurmountable cultural differences has become more popular. In this respect, the new European racism and xenophobia are the same given that they are both characterized by a focus of hostility that is not exclusively defined by the traditional terms of colour and race that was typical of 'biological' racism but stresses cultural factors (see Holmes 2000; Macmaster 2001). To many, this type of 'racism'

³ For further examples, see Beck (1996; 2002), Calhoun (2003), Delanty (2001; 2003a; 2005a; 2006a) and Pieterse (2001).

⁴ Examples include Fine (2003), Held (1995) and Kögler (2005).

⁵ For recent further discussion, see Papastephanou (2002); Roudometof (2005) and Turner (2002).

carries no stigma as it merely draws upon 'commonsense' arguments of 'cultural differences'. Far-Right parties across Europe have become hugely successful in utilising such values in order to sell their policies, often focussing upon new hostilities toward immigrants and refugees/asylum-seekers who are then cast as new 'others'. (Rydgren 2003; 2004; Delanty and O'Mahony 2002; Wodak and Pelinka 2002). Therefore, the denial of overt prejudice and the rise of commonsense racism and xenophobia have led to more pervasive and diffuse forms of exclusion, even to the point of an inverted liberal argument that stresses that the recognition of cultural differences is a denial of racism (Van Dijk 1989).

Many existing 'European identity/identification' studies focus upon the extent to which intra-European cosmopolitanism or xenophobia exists. For instance, Amin (2004) argues that a contemporary European identity is characterised as the way in which multiculturalism has been internalised to produce a new idea of Europe. Therefore, he argues that 'to be European' is to accept other cultures. This conception of a European identification is consistent with the EU's post-1992 pledge to 'unity in diversity'. This phrase is intended to be inclusive – we are united through our differences – but because of its open nature, it seems rather vacuous. The sentiment of inter-cultural understanding is unproblematic, yet, given that identifications are partially relational (see Chapter Two), the idea of a totally inclusive European identification seems unrealistic. Jones' (2006a) argument is similar. He suggests that if a European cosmopolitan identification was to develop, on some levels it would probably be necessary to exclude non-Europeans. This would reduce intra-European xenophobia but would not necessarily make citizens more cosmopolitan. Taking a different approach, Young (2001) argues that European

citizenship should continue to develop according to the pledge to 'unity in diversity'. However, rather than looking to territorial fractures, she suggests that a cosmopolitan European identity should be based upon a 'politics of difference'. This would mean increasing the inclusion of women, homosexuals, older and disabled people (as well as various ethnic groups) into the conception of a European cosmopolitan identification. However, given the earlier discussion which focussed on the need to unpack the meaning of identity, the preferred discourse is, once again, identification. The argument for the use of this lexicon is that cosmopolitan values tend to focus upon a sharing of common identification with other people, irrespective of nationality and as such, they are treated with respect.

Having considered such manifestations, the next issue will focus on how European identifications are constructed. Delanty (2004: 79-80) argues that there are at least two approaches that help to build common European cultural ties. These are state-led/formal approaches and informal societal-led alternatives. In most respects the relationship between the approaches are not dichotomist, for instance Shore (2000) argues that a successful European identification is built from above and below which means that both informal and formal approaches are involved in its production and maintenance. Therefore, while the EU does not directly condition informal or societal approaches, the formal policies it emits may have an indirect impact upon the modification of identifications, whilst, on the other hand, formal attempts to create culture may have to pay careful attention to informal means. Hence, formal and informal ways of nurturing identities/identifications can be mutually complimentary or confrontational. The two approaches will now be considered.

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Formal Approaches

Delanty and Mahony (2002) stress that the 'modernist' view is that states (led by political elites) can both develop and strengthen national identities.⁶ With the partial development of the European citizen, many consider that a European super/supra-state has been developed from which it is possible to create a European nation.⁷ The European integration project has drawn upon a number of treaties to cement a European togetherness, dedicating an entire process to this in 1973 (the 'Declaration of European Identity'⁸) and there have been numerous follow ups which give more than a cursory mentions to European belonging.⁹ Additionally, there are at least four other key areas which the EU has used to try to induce a European identification. These are: the introduction of the euro currency;¹⁰ the development of a EU cultural policy¹¹ which increases symbols of 'Europeaness';¹² the European media,¹³ and, pan-European educational policies.¹⁴ Fossum (2001), Kohli (2000) and Shore (2000) have evaluated the success of these policies as mixed. This ought not to be too surprising given that it is not always explicitly clear what the EU is seeking to build and how this might impact upon national forms of identification (Cederman 2001). In an EU context, this problem will now be elaborated.

⁶ See particularly Billig (1995); Brubaker (1996); Elias (1982); Gellner (1983; 1995) and Giddens (1985).

⁷ See, for instance Castells and Ince (2003: 127); d' Azeglio (in Cederman 2001: 139); Shore (2000 and Wilterdink (1993).

⁸ This was signed and drafted at testing time of European unity, as the mid seventies European oil crisis was said to be creating an adverse effect upon integration. This was later termed 'Eurosclerosis'. This treaty stressed that members of the nine states shared 'the same attitudes to life, based on a determination to build a society which measures up to the needs of the individual' (CEC 1973:119)

⁹ This has been featured in both the Maastricht Treaty (1992) and the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997).

¹⁰ See Borneman and Fowler (1997: 500-2), Delanty (2004) and Risse (2002).

¹¹ See Delanty (2004) Delanty and Jones (2002) Roche (2001) Sassatelli (2002) and Shore (2000).

¹² See Bainbridge and Teadsdale (1995) Delanty (2004) Hedetoft (1995: 125) and Shore (2000).

¹³ See Cederman (2001: 159-60); Delanty (2000) and Shore (2000).

¹⁴ See Delanty (2004) and Shore (2000).

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Marcussen *et al.* (1999: 618) argue that there are four conceptions of EU identities.

First, there are 'liberal nationalists' who envisage a weak European identification developing out of strong national identities. This idea postulates that the nation politically and economically belongs to the EU but is culturally autonomous.

Advocates of this group include Milward (1992) and Wallace (1994). The second group see a European identity developing through shared cosmopolitan values which are conditioned by common geography, history and culture. Marcussen *et al.* argue that the third classification refers to identifications which have spun from the perception of Europe as a global 'third force' between the extremes of capitalism and communism (*ibid*: 618). Last, Marcussen *et al.* argue that there are those who believe that Europe should stay close to its historical roots and build upon Christian morals and values. Examples of this group include Giscard d'Estaing (2002) and Garton Ash (2002).¹⁵ Alternatively, Tisdall (2002) argues that in the modern day such values would provide an illegitimate, racist and historically prejudiced identifications.¹⁶

However, by moving away from the idea of 'A European Identity' stated in the 1973 Treaty, the EU has begun to accept differences between its citizens with the 'unity in diversity' cosmopolitan pledge. Despite the immense power of the pseudo-state to manufacture and shape identifications to the point of developing a sense of belonging, other potential EU identification problems also become apparent. For instance, Fossum (2001) provides a pertinent concern by arguing that modern states have traditionally tried to foster uniform identifications. Therefore, although national

¹⁵ According to Bowcott (2002) Valéry Giscard d'Estaing caused 'uproar' in November 2002, by demanding that Turkey never be allowed to join the EU because it is 'a different culture, a different approach, a different way of life'.

¹⁶ The Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan argues that his country, which is largely Muslim, should be allowed into the EU because it would 'send a positive signal to the Islamic world'. He suggests that this would help to union to become 'a major force in the world' (Bowcott 2002).

identifications allow limited room for manoeuvrability and interpretation, which offer the potential for individuals to develop other niche identities, he feels that a dominant state-led European identification would have to follow a modernist, nation-state-like model which distinguishes differences. Hence, a meaningful European identification would potentially be juxtaposed against deeply embedded national forms of belonging, particularly if the EU tries to create cultures using those means which created or shaped national identities (Shore 2000). By seeking to include all EU citizens, state-led attempts to foster identifications may have to become quite prominent in order to capture public interest. This raises the possibility that citizens might 'reject' such attempts because by accepting policies and symbols they are legitimating a loss of national sovereignty. Thus, these approaches can have the opposite effect to what the EU intended; that is, they may make people feel *less* European (Castells 2004 [1997]: 6-12; Hedetoft 2003: 26; Wallace 1994: 24) because EU political identifications cannot rival national loyalties (Bauböck 2000; Delanty 2000; 2003; 2004; Fossum 2001; Garton-Ash 2001). The EU has recognised the significance of this concern by devoting Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty (1992) to it. Officially, this section of the Treaty backtracks some of the 1973 aspirations by explicitly recognising that homogeneous Europeans should not be created but that EU citizenship should be diverse and reflect vibrant European national cultures. This would clearly help to aid the advance of a cosmopolitan European identity/identification. Yet, Shore (2000) argues that, in reality, the EU has continued to further a 'standardised' identification which can legitimate the political idea of Europe. On the basis of existing research, it also appears doubtful that the EU state *has* altered the way people relate to the political definition of Europe. In 1977, Inglehart conducted a quantitative study to consider the development of European

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loyalties and wanted to look at how this may be impacting upon existing political cultures. Although he discovered the highest levels of European association in the six original members of the ECSC (European Coal and Steel Community), he also found that 'relatively few respondents felt that they belonged, above all, to Europe' (Inglehart 1977: 153). However, he concluded his research by arguing that 'supra-national loyalties *do* exist' because some people identified with Europe as a supplementary form of loyalty, after national or sub-national ties. Twenty-three years later, Kohli (2000) carried out a similar study and found the same results, namely that most respondents identified most strongly with national communities but some respondents held European support as an additional loyalty. These results diminish Inglehart's claim that the fading memory of the Second World War would lead to a primary identification with a more democratic Europe. It also demonstrates that at least one of two possibilities had happened. First, contrary to Shore's belief, a European state has not yet been developed. This is an argument that Habermas (2001), Habermas and Derrida (2003) and Weiler (1999) all favour. Second, pseudo-state attempts to develop identification with Europe have not been as successful as those employed on national levels. However, this does not mean that a European culture cannot be developed as state-led means can be supplemented by societal/informal identifications.

Informal Approaches

Like EU-led efforts, societal or informal processes can also help the public to *imagine* a common European community. However, these means are fundamentally different to formal attempts because they are not designed by EU policy. This is because societal definitions of *Europe* are multiple and do not only refer to the EU. The

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uncertainty of what constitutes *Europe* may offer the potential for positive social advances by creating a more cosmopolitan continent, given that *Europe* is defined in multiple ways. On the other hand, the meaning of *Europe* may become so vague that individuals may not understand *exactly* what *it is*. This means that European culture may never move beyond the level of abstraction. This may either undermine the EU or lead to it being recognised as the *only* definition of Europe. Ironically, through abiding to a range of European identities/identifications rather than a centralised European identity/identification, societal definitions may adhere to the EU's cosmopolitan commitment to 'unity in diversity'.

Societal European identifications have the potential to be far older than the EU. For instance, Delanty (2000: 54) points out that Burke (1796) argued that 'no European can be an exile in any part of Europe' two centuries before the creation of the EU. Further, according to some (such as Anderson 1991 [1983]; Delanty 1995; 1995a; Bodei 1995) a Europe identification which pre-dates the nation-state was borne out of Christianity in the ancient and pre-modern periods. According to Anderson (1991 [1983]) and Berger (1973) religion is particularly good at creating identities/identifications because it legitimates codes of behaviour and gives rise to common goals, values and rituals, which are elements of a collective identification.¹⁷ This may help to produce the type of European identification which embraces the Christian idea of Europe.

¹⁷ For further details, see Bodei (1995); Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995); Hobsbawn (1984); Roche (2001: 75).

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However, the power of religion as a creator of a European identity/identification may have decreased in recent years with the general European trend of secularisation (Roche 2001: 87). This does not mean that Christianity can no longer encode a European identification, but the numerical loss of believers does make it 'thinner'. Yet, Delanty (2004: 85) argues that all societal definitions are thin for two main reasons. First, a conception is thin because it is rooted to a particular cultural context. This means that identifications are fluid according to the situation a person finds him/herself in and that s/he may be European when confronted with one particular situation, while anything but European in others. Thus, societal identifications are thin because they are fluid and not fixed in the way that a formal identification of a European may be in the case of an EU passport or flag.

Delanty (2004) also believes that societal identifications are thin because they have multiple definitions. Effectively this means that they are less rooted in static traditions and have been shaken by the loss of universality of identity or the rise of the politics of difference (Van Ham 2003). This idea resonates with many (such as Calhoun 1995; Fossum 2001; Kaplan 1999) who argue that nations, as a 'thick' all encompassing state-led identifications, are now being deconstructed with the rise of new technologies and global consumerism. This means that the state is being eroded as the universal source of legitimate identification and this creates new tensions for national identities (Peters 2002; Van Ham 2003; Wilterdink 1993). The loss of state sovereignty will mean that sharp contrasts across national boundaries will melt and differences within a territory will become more apparent (Ahrweiler 1993; Calhoun 2001: 36; Kaplan 1999: 46; Van Ham 2003). This opens up the possibility of niche identities, which are common to *some* Europeans, such as the experience of being a

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woman, gay, or non-white which have been oppressed in national systems (Calhoun 1995; Fossum 2001). If this happens, a cosmopolitan European identification may be produced.

A question which arises is what makes *Europeans* 'European'? Quite obviously a European can be female, homosexual or non-white, but not all people who could be depicted by any/all of these descriptions are European. It is fair to assume that identifications may transcend all national boundaries, but Calhoun (2001) asks what processes encourage thin identifications to develop within ambiguous European boundaries rather than the entire globe? In essence what is *European* or *particular to Europe* about European culture which might mark it from global culture? European identifications must be tested against non-European identifications if these questions are to be answered.

According to Van Ham (2003) the EU argues that cosmopolitan tolerance and acceptance of difference is an element of a European identity. This is an extremely wide and somewhat shaky suggestion. At best, it is a thin conception rather than the thicker ideals which may provide cultural legitimacy for the EU, because whilst acceptance and tolerance are virtues of many Europeans, not all have these personal characteristics and there may be circumstances where some citizens who are usually tolerant are not. At its weakest, it is not a characteristic of a European identification in that there is no evidence to suggest that non-Europeans are not equally tolerant (whatever 'tolerance' actually refers to). Therefore, this suggestion might be more aptly addressed to a thin global culture.

Given that Europe has a multitude of different national and sub-national languages but no European vernacular, language also becomes another barrier against a European culture.¹⁸ This obstacle is not so pressing in the political and academic fields where English is used as a lingua franca (Roche 2001), but Eder (2001: 231) claims that European identities should be multi-levelled and reach all individuals in society, including those who do not speak a second language. Thus, European identifications must be based upon cultures which may not be totally dependent upon linguistic communication. They must also resonate with European cultures which encapsulate the interests of, and find an arenas which are particular to, Europeans (Castells and Ince 2003: 130). Kumar (2003a) suggests that there a number of potential melting pots for an emerging European culture which range 'from films to food and sex' with 'continental travel [for the] ... standard for all classes' (2003a: 17). Overlapping this, Borneman and Fowler (1997) suggest three possible spaces in which European cultures may develop. These are sex¹⁹, tourism²⁰ and sport. Additionally, Roche (2001) contends that the later two provide principal arenas for European identification. The next section takes sport as a departure point and to consider whether European cultures can emanate from it.

SPORT AND EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATION/IDENTIFICATIONS

On a general level, Borneman and Fowler (1997: 508-10) argue that sport conditions European identifications for three main reasons. First, like tourism, sport promotes

¹⁸ See Borneman and Fowler (1997); Garcia (1993); Ifversen (2002: 9); Lowenthal (2000); Schlesinger (2003); Wilterdink (1993: 121)

¹⁹ The addition of sex to this list may be dubious. However, Borneman and Fowler (1997) point out that many relationships transcend national borders, and this can help Europeans learn about other national cultures.

²⁰ Borneman and Fowler (1997) argue that tourism is a sphere where European identifications are created, because it is a situation which promotes cultural mixing.

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the physical movement of European players and supporters across the continent. Second, the mass appeal of sport has made it very attractive to media companies, and with the development of the information age, televised games are now available to every European who has the technology to receive daily broadcasts. Consequently, technology is more important than spatial mobility and Europe is generally well developed in this respect. Third, EU law has affected sporting practices. This is most notable in football, because the 'Bosman' ruling has promoted the free movement of sportsmen to create a 'genuine Europeanising of local teams' (Borneman and Fowler *ibid*: 509). This movement is European because there are no restrictions on the number of EU citizens who can be employed by a particular club. This continues to support the idea of the interpenetration of the 'formal' EU sphere upon more informal visions of a European society, using the case example of football.

Sport can be a useful tool for constructing/developing a notion of a trans-European identification for a number of reasons. First, Bale (1993: 55) argues that 'sport in its modern form, and archetypically football in its modern form, provides what is arguably the major focus for collective identification' (echoed in Bale 1998: 256) because, as Hobsbawn (1984) articulates, it provides recognisable hero figures, customs and symbols, and second, unlike some other means, it does not rely upon a common European language in either an official or lingua franca capacity (*The Economist* 2003: 42). Additionally, Roche (2001: 87) argues that 'sport is the new religion of the people'. Therefore Roche (2001) is suggesting that if the ancient Roman/European society was built upon Christianity, a new European society could be built upon sport. Roche may have made this comment slightly with his tongue in his cheek, but his underlying message is very clear: sport provides a range of rituals,

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with 'quasi-religious experiences such as those of sacred and transcendence' (ibid: 87) which affect the identifications of sports fans in the same way that religion does its followers²¹; it also meets Castells and Ince (2003: 130) and Eder's (2001) requirements for a European identity which appeals to citizens. This means that sport *could* be considered as a possible vehicle to drive trans-European identifications.

Despite this, Roche (2001: 88) argues that there has been little recognition of sport's power to forge identities in any European treaty until the post Maastricht era. However, Reding (2004), in her role as the EU Commissioner for Education, suggested that this may change by announcing that 'sport is a great tool to construct a European identity'. With this in mind, the next section will examine how sport has been used (and neglected) to fulfil this goal.

Formal approaches

Previously, it was stated that there are at least four important areas through which the EU has tried to develop a European identification (euro currency, development of an EU cultural policy, increasing use of symbols of 'Europeanness', and via scientific and educational policies). In recent years sport has begun to be increasingly used as a way to promote identifications. This section demonstrates these movements.

Although Roche is correct that European Community treaties ignored sport until the post-Maastricht era, the European Commission did pay attention to its power within

²¹ Edge (1997) highlights this issue by referring to football supporters 'career' as undergoing a 'Baptism' (pp20-28), 'Indoctrination' (pp29-122), 'Confirmation' (pp123-145), 'Communion' (pp146-161), 'Confession' (pp162-177) and 'Penance' (pp178-203), whereas Allt (2004: 148) refers to his support as a 'religious devotion'.

the Adonnino report (1985) by suggesting that sport could be used to assist the creation of a European cultural identity (Adonnino 1985). However, there are two main points which suggest that this recommendation was not immediately followed up. First, as Roche (2001: 88) argues, it took the European Union until 1997 to formally recognise the 'social significance of sport, in particular its role in forging identity and bringing people together' in the Amsterdam Treaty. This remains the only EU treaty which formally acknowledges sport. However, and second, it was only in September 1998 that the European Commission recognised that 'sport is not only an economic activity but also part of European identity' (cited in European Commission DGX 1999). This was ratified in the Helsinki report on sport (1999).²²

Furthermore, Brown (2000: 130) states that the subsequent European Commission report returned to the broader objectives of the EU. For instance he suggests that the Commission outlined the EU priorities as:

[C]reating synergy between Europe's democratic bodies; creating balance between the European Commission, other institutions and civil society; providing leadership in the world; improving the social model and addressing the increasing wealth gap; and responding to citizens' concerns

COM (2000: 154 final, in Brown 2000: 130).

Brown (2000) argues that football has resonance in all of these objectives: from the inequality of wealth which may endanger sport's traditional principle of solidarity, to Europe's leading role in world football, and to balancing the different interests of the Commission and Community with those of the governing bodies and clubs on the other. Moreover, and perhaps most important from an identity perspective, a later

²² Reding (2000) views this report as the 'defining moment as regards where the Commission stands in relation to sport'.

Commission consultation document adheres to the EU official pledge toward 'unity in diversity' in simultaneously recognising the importance of sport for European and 'national or regional identity by giving people a sense of belonging to a group' (European Commission DGX 1999: 4). In this sense, both Brown (2000: 142) and Connelly (2000: 11) see sport, and particularly football, as a key European space in which identifications can prosper. It is important to recognise that football preserves the differences which arise from different clubs (both within and beyond national boundaries). Thus, theoretically, sports events offer a true potential to achieve a European 'unity in diversity' (Brown 2000: 145).

Billig (1995: 119) convincingly demonstrates that sport is successful in fostering national identifications because it provides an arena for the veneration of national symbols such as flags and anthems. King (2004) has pointed out that TEAM, who are UEFA's marketing partners have shown an awareness of the importance of flags when designing the 'new symbols of European football'. King suggests that the 'starball', which symbolically represents the Champions League, was chosen by TEAM and UEFA because it has 'overtones of the European Union ... [as it] echo[es] the 15 stars of the European flag' (King 2004: 327). Despite the potential of flags to create common European identifications, they have not been exhaustively utilised, for instance at UEFA's Euro 2004 and Champions League football matches, the EU flag and anthem are neither displayed nor heard. On one level, this is not entirely surprising: Missiroli (2002) accurately points out that UEFA and the EU are not directly linked.²³ Yet, if, as seems likely, the EU and its connected commissions are

²³ However, Missiroli (2002) does point out that in some respects UEFA and the EU are interlinked, in ways which stretch beyond the Bosman ruling. For instance, UEFA was founded in 1954, in the wake of a joint Franco-Belgian-Italian initiative, after the ECSC but before the Treaty of Rome, whereas

beginning to take sport seriously, it seems like a wasted opportunity to remind supporters that they are European.

Yet, sport has played a facilitating role in European educational policy, which the EU has previously used to forge identifications; 2004 was the 'European Year of Education through Sport' (EYES). Established at the behest of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, its main aims are derived from the Amsterdam Treaty and have an emphasis on the unifying qualities of sport, particularly its ability to 'promote the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups' (EYES 2004). There is no specific mention of using sport as a vehicle to further the limited definition of a tangible trans-European identification, but it does recognise the importance of international sporting tournaments to heighten public awareness of issues (such as social unification) through sport.

Despite these 'formal' approaches to develop a European identification through sport, Delanty (2004) also argued that a societal consciousness might be emerging which has little to do with formal EU attempts. Indeed, such measures could well be impinging the construction of such identifications because of the scepticism generated with the involvement of the EU in such projects. Instead, it is increasing interaction on an informal level that may be helping to shape a shared European identification. The following section considers this informal arena.

Milward (1995) reminds us that the football provided one of the first bi-lateral exchanges after the Second World War.

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Informal approaches

As earlier considered, while some societal definitions of Europe are vague, UEFA has clear boundaries. Thus, unlike some European classifications, UEFA has no ambiguity over who is included and excluded. On the basis of this, people can identify with this *idea of Europe* (see Chapter Three).

Furthermore, Hobsbawn (1992: 143) reasons that sports teams can make an 'imagined community of millions ... [seem] more real as a team of eleven named people'. Thus, football would offer great potential to develop a strong European consciousness if it had a European football team. However, aside from the occasional 'show match' there is no side which represents Europe. Indeed, apart from the golf Ryder Cup (which pits Europeans against Americans), there are very few meaningful European teams which play against the 'other'. Rather, in European Championship finals/qualifying groups and World Cup qualifying matches, international football pits European nations against each other. This means that nations view each other as their external 'others'.²⁴ It is clear that the choice of 'other' is not exclusively based upon previous sporting events, but draws upon national collective memories, usually in the form of battles or wars. This provides substance for those, such as Hedetoft (1995), who follow George Orwell in believing that football is 'war without guns'. Indeed, a number of studies (such as Blain and O'Donnell 1994; Boyle and Haynes 2000;

²⁴ A few examples of strong 'others' in European football include: England Vs Germany (Beck 2003; Blain and O'Donnell 1994; Maguire and Poulton 1999; Polley 2004); England Vs Turkey (Evans and Rowe 2002); Scotland Vs England (Bairner 2001); Germany Vs Holland (Kuyper 1994). Additionally, anecdotal evidence of England fans seeing Europe as their 'other' comes from the author John King in *England Away* (1999). This story tells of how England fans travel across Europe causing trouble with other Europeans. An excerpt from this book which sums up the essence of King's main characters anti-European feeling might be 'holding that shitty red passport close, the proud old British version ripped up and burnt by the invisible scum in Brussels. Manky old cunts busy working through the night, nailing us with the European tag' (King 1999: 3).

Crolley; and Hand 2002; 2007; Crolley, Hand and Jeutter 1998; Maguire and Poulton 1999) have demonstrated the role that the media can play in constructing national sporting identities/identifications. In their study of the Euro '96 Championships, Maguire and Poulton (1999) point out that in England's games against Switzerland, Scotland, Holland, Spain and Germany, the English media continually relive history to demonstrate English superiority. In this sense, the media galvanises the nation by alluding to a selected historical memory, which conveniently recalls glorious narratives from the past but also experiences a form of collective amnesia when it comes to less proud national moments. Similarly, Crolley and Hand (2002) show that even in the 'quality' English newspapers, inaccurate stereotypes are used to describe non-English teams. Moreover, both Crabbe (2003) and Weed (2001) point out that the national press continue to build upon these differences by sensationalising troubles which occur at football games. Importantly, for the majority of football fans who engage with the media, the reportage of the national media potentially destroys any advances toward a common cultural identification based upon football.

Indeed, a degree of violent xenophobic rivalry does exist. For instance, Brimson (2003) reports how two Leeds United fans, Kevin Speight and Chris Loftus, were stabbed to death in Istanbul by Galatasaray fans after watching their team play a UEFA Cup semi-final in April 2000, and the memory of the 39 Juventus fans who died in the Heysel disaster (1985) is also deeply embedded within European football culture (see Chapter Three). While death through football-related violence is unusual, attacks are not, as hooliganism has occurred between football fans in almost every European nation; there is a wealth of sociological research which reports such findings. One such example is provided by Back *et al.* (1999) who stated that

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England's 1995 'friendly' match with the Republic of Ireland was abandoned due to crowd violence – which was initiated by the political far-Right. This evidence may raise doubts regarding Brown's (2000) claim that football provides a key to European 'unity in diversity'. Yet, as a counter point, Clarke (1992) argues that although hooliganism is a serious offence, it is dramatically overstated by journalists and sociologists because it is more 'interesting' or newsworthy than peaceful forms of fandom. In reality, he argues that only a minority of fans indulge in these activities. Similarly, Crabbe (2003: 421-2) points out that while newspapers were over reporting very minor scuffles during the 1998 World Cup, far more non-French fans were singing non-confrontational, celebratory songs in the bars in Montpellier (where Crabbe was stationed). Perhaps most significantly, he claims that an important form of 'cultural exchange' was occurring in which national fans were even singing *each other's* anthems (Crabbe 2003: 421). The second point is that football violence is still a minority football activity which even occurs *within* nations. For instance Allt (2004) reports upon Liverpool's fan 'battles' with Manchester United, Everton and Leeds United, Gehrmann (1994) tells us about Schalke 04's violent rivalry with Borussia Dortmund and Kuyper (1994) claims football's most hostile enmity is between Glasgow clubs Rangers and Celtic. While these events potentially offer judicial problems, they may not undermine national identifications for other members of society. Thus, for the majority of fans who do not participate in violent rivalry, the possibility of a European identification – based upon a sharing of culture - cannot be dismissed.

However, there has been relatively little research which looks at the impact of informal football interactions upon the shape of European identifications. Beginning

to develop a skeleton structure for future research, Gellner (1995a: 7-8) has argued that in the broad society, 'late industrialism' has engendered massive labour migrations, in which the affluent citizens of advanced industrial societies are no longer willing to occupy lowly positions or move to suit the employment market's demands. At the same time, inhabitants of less fortunate nations are happy to fill real or perceived labour market vacancies. Within some European countries, there have been provisions to ensure the free movement of citizens since Articles 48, 85 and 86 of the Treaty of Rome (1957) and since 1992, this has been further facilitated by Article 14 of the Maastricht Treaty which strengthened the evolving project of EU citizenship (Soysal 1994). This allowed EU citizens to freely move between EU states, without the need for a work permit.

Rydgren (2003: 51) argues that a way of overcoming xenophobia is to frame immigration and population movements in a positive way. Potentially, this may happen in the case of elite European football, as *foreign stars* are signed to *local teams*. In the contemporary era it is not unusual for a club side from one country to be comprised of players of many nationalities. Yet, this has not always been the case. Indeed, Harris (2003: 5) reports that between 1931, when the FA introduced a two year residency rule to deter imports, and 1978, when European Community legislation ruled that national associations could not lawfully ban players from Common Market countries, *foreign* players were effectively excluded from playing in England.²⁵ Yet from 1978-9, when the English FA took heed of this new legislation (see Arnaut 2006: 2.11), this was no longer the case and King (2003) argues that this has created a

²⁵ However, this does not mean that the 47 year period was without non-British players, who came and played in England despite the ruling, because they either arrived before 1931, came from colonial territories or were refugees/prisoners of war who never returned home

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European transfer market. This growth was accentuated after the European Court of Justice 'Bosman' ruling in December 1995. This had two major impacts, as it first ordered that the Belgian footballer, Jean-Marc Bosman, was entitled to leave his club RFC Liege, where his contract had expired and sign a new deal at the French club US Dunkerque without any compensation or transfer fee being paid. This marked a profound change from the existing transfer system (which was not entirely consistent across Europe) that often involved the exchange of players for vast sums of money. Second, the ruling also deemed the existing directives which stated that all European clubs were banned from playing any more than 'three foreigners' (plus two 'assimilated foreigners'²⁶), as illegal. Therefore, the 'Bosman' rule pointed out that restricting the number of *foreign* nationals from other EU member states contravened the principles outlined in the Treaty of Rome which were strengthened by the Maastricht Treaty (Greenfield and Osborn 2001: 84-85; Magee 2002: 217; Simmons 1997: 14). Hence the restriction was removed.

By removing *foreigner* restrictions, the impacts of an emerging European society hit football in at least two significant ways. First, the Bosman case potentially brought home the reality of the developing model of European citizenship to football supporters. Second, the increasing number of non-national European players in local teams might be one way in which national stereotypes are being eroded and a European consciousness may be developing. Of course, *foreigners* can be both European and non-European, and the latter might open up the possibilities of global, rather than European, identifications. However, whilst the Bosman ruling and Karpin

²⁶ A non-national who has been seen to adopt a new country by uninterruptedly playing for clubs in that country (junior and senior teams) for at least five years - at any one point. For further elaboration on the Bosman ruling, see Dobson and Goddard (2001: 189-239); Garland and Rowe (2001: 115-6); Maguire and Pearton (2000: 761-2); Maguire and Stead (1998).

amendment allows non-national EU and Russian players to make up the squad of a club from an EU member state, the number of non-European players is restricted to an absolute maximum of five (but often three). This draws a distinction between Europe and the rest of the world. As a result, Maguire and Stead (1998) and Magee and Sugden (2002: 425-7) argue that English football has experienced the growth of new player migration routes, which have supplemented the pre-existing Irish and Scandinavian 'brawn drain' (McGovern 2000; 2002). Therefore, a European identification might be borne through the new array of nationalities in English football and this may be cross referenced with Hobsbawn's (1984) belief that the sports hero shapes a national consciousness. *The Economist* has speculated upon this by reporting that:

Football has probably made Britons think more amicably about their fellow Europeans than anything else in Britain. The British view of foreign footballers used to be pretty plain: Italians cheated and spent their time rolling around on the floor to earn free kicks; the French gave up if it was raining or windy; the Germans were arrogant and humourless. But then along came players like Gianfranco Zola, an Italian recently voted by the fans at Chelsea, a London club, as its best-ever player, adored not just because of his skill but also because of his sportsmanship. Across town, Arsenal are captained by Patrick Vieira, a Frenchman who is one of the toughest players in the English league (even when it's raining). His club's rival, Tottenham Hotspur, fell for Jurgen Klinsmann, a German striker, who turned out to have a self-deprecating sense of humour as well as a talent for scoring goals. Meanwhile, England's Gary Lineker moved to Barcelona and showed that some Brits can learn foreign languages.

The Economist (2003: 42).

Indeed, Kuper (2002: 204) has added his weight to this opinion by arguing that the English Football Writers' Association has chosen a continental European as player of the year for four consecutive years (1995-9). Since Kuper's inception, the same body have awarded the distinction to Arsenal's French players Robert Pires (2002) and Thierry Henry (twice, in 2003 and 2004) giving further credibility to the claim. In

this sense, European football idols are breaking down national stereotypes and sending out messages that Europeans can be 'one of us'. To elaborate, Cashmore (2002; 2003) and Chung (2003) argue that sports icons can change perceptions of other social groups, and forge new identifications. Following this argument, one such identification could be, as *The Economist* (2003) and Kuper (2002) state, aligned with an idea of Europe. Indeed, Williams (1999: 195) largely concurs with these ideas by arguing that supporters within one nation might begin to support another, on the basis of past or present club player affiliations:

Should we be at all surprised these days that at the moment Chelsea fans also 'now care' for Italy? Or that Arsenal fans have a soft spot for the Dutch and the French? ... Today, however, as well as traditional Irish affiliations, many Man Utd and Liverpool supporters now also have selective *Scandinavian* leanings at national level.

Williams (emphasis in original, 1999: 195)

However, this whole notion must be problematised and Gardiner (1998) and Shore (2000) have reservations about the potential cosmopolitan impacts of football. First, Shore argues that non-national sporting hero figures do not create a growing recognition of like minded 'Europeaness' as he argues that the sports-players are viewed as assimilating into national culture, even though they definitely *do not*. This is consistent with the research Chiba *et al.* (2001) has carried out on how the Japanese society interprets its adopted sports players – such as the Canadian born players in Japanese ice hockey teams – as 'assimilating' to the point of 'naturalisation'. Levermore and Millward (2007) straddle the opinions of Shore and Williams by finding that during the Euro2004 Championships, supporters of elite English teams were keenly following the progress of their club players in the international tournament but also showed how they perceived such players to have assimilated, by

referring to them with adopted 'Anglo-fied' names.²⁷ On the other hand, Gardiner (1998) proposes a different idea. Taking the Frenchman Eric Cantona's playing career in England as a case example, he argues that non-British players are not accepted by English football fans, but are constantly demonised as the 'other'. His evidence is two-fold. First, drawing upon King (1995), he argues that Cantona's cult figure status was always based upon the fact that he was French, and therefore only ambiguously accepted. So, whilst this can be taken as a celebration of a lack of xenophobia, Gardiner argues that he was never wholly accepted. On the other hand, an alternative interpretation of Gardiner's evidence might provide a different result – the fact that he was accepted because he is French was ample evidence to suggest that a European identification *based upon difference* was being formed. This is, after all, what the EU pledged to build in the Maastricht Treaty (1992). Additionally, Gardiner raises another point, by suggesting that although Cantona was hero-worshipped by the fans of clubs he played for (at least whilst he wore their colours), fans of other clubs targeted him for abuse because he was not British, which culminated in Cantona retaliating with a 'kung-fu kick' on Crystal Palace fan, Matthew Simmons in 1995 (for further elaboration, see Back *et al.* 2001: 185-92).²⁸ However, while Gardiner is correct that Cantona did receive torrents of abuse, he needs to qualify whether this was because he was seen as the 'other', or for more liberal reasons, such as that he was thought to be an exceptionally high quality player with a short temper and was liable to 'self-destruct'. In Chapter Four these tensions are addressed to find that football can make supporters both more xenophobic and cosmopolitan at different times.

²⁷ Gellner (1995a: 6) would argue that this represents an anti-xenophobic outlook, given that he states that an individual cannot be xenophobic if he/she loves other nations as much as his/her own.

²⁸ As experienced in Chapter Four, this type of research is hugely difficult to 'prove', given that there is a liberal argument that players' are targeted for criticism because of personal character traits/playing styles rather than those which are reducible to any type of prejudice.

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Moving onto identifications related to a perception of Europe, King (2000; 2003) provides the most comprehensive study into the development European consciousnesses amongst football fans. King (2000; 2003) argues that Manchester United fans are beginning to see themselves as more European and two main mechanisms are propelling this culture. These are: the increased opportunity to travel across Europe brought about by the greater number of Champions League games and the augmented coverage of European leagues on British television. In a covert study of football's 'underground economy', Sugden (2002a) found similar results in so far as Manchester United and Leeds United fans were taking the opportunity of UEFA club competition as a chance to visit many key cities across Europe. While on these travels, fans would indulge in 'sight seeing'. However, the 'tourist events' which particularly appealed to the group were highly masculine activities such as binge drinking and the pursuit of prostitutes. Therefore such 'hedonism' took preference over fighting with local 'soccer firms' and developed an unconventional, but favourable, impression of *Europe*. However, Sugden suggests that this identification is exclusionary because *Europe* constitutes only large non-British cities - preferably with a 'legend dimension' - with impressive football teams (Sugden 2002a: 72). Redhead (1991) offers an alternative reason why football fans might align with a football-based idea of Europe. In his research, he looks at Liverpool fans' European travel in the 1980s when he argues that supporters brought 'back spoils of their European conquests - scarves, jewellery, casual tops, trainers, shoes' and this was manifest in an appreciation of *Europe* through fashion tastes (Redhead 1991: 77-8).

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The types of fan that King, Redhead and Sugden have researched are quite similar and might be described as *traditional* supporters, in that they are male, with working class origins and follow their side by attending matches. However, Crawford (2003) provides a reminder that there is a need to nuance categories of fandom. For instance, he argues that supporters are increasingly middle class and consume games both publicly and privately through the media (this issue is addressed at greater length in Chapter Two). As a result of the mass explosion of football's popularity, television rights to tournaments have increasingly become commodities that can be sold to supporters through media consumption across the globe. For these reasons, Bale (1998) argues that football has become placeless and under such conditions, Sandvoss (2003) shows how successful teams can be identified with by people all over the world, within or beyond the boundaries of Europe (by which ever definition).

CONCLUSION

This first half of this chapter has reviewed the existing literature to look at how *Europe* has been defined and has considered the nature of European identities/identifications. In the second half, these principles have been applied to the case example of football, particularly to theoretically consider the European themed identities/identifications which could be bound up with experiences of fandom. It has found that *Europe* does not have a single definition and refers to slightly different territories and ideologies at different times. For some, the ill-defined notion emerges around nation-states, while for others mega-cities are more important. Subsequently, the identifications which sprout from these territories cannot be easily conceptualised. There are two dominant manifestations of these cultures, first, a positive identification based around a perception of Europe and second, the absence of intra-European

xenophobic discourse, loosely based around the EU defined idea of 'unity in diversity'. Chapter Three considers how the two sets of football fans are identifying with a football defined example of Europe, Chapter Five looks at how the same process may be occurring in respect to the EU and Chapter Four explores the presence of xenophobic attitudes in English football culture.

The literature does not tell us how developed any form of European identification emanating from football support might be. For instance, King (2000; 2003) argues that it is only a partial maturity, given that his respondents' lack a common cultural heritage which is present with national football rivals, he witnessed early indications of trans-European football violence, and the lack of an external 'other'. Of these, arguably the most important is the latter, which is a key part in the development of any coherent collective identification. In both football and other definitions, *Europe* does not have a convincing 'other'. It is not yet clear whether this would prohibit the development of a football-based European identity (expressed as identification or a value). Thus, the relationship between Europe, European identities/identifications and football needs further exploration. So, while this combination is not immediately obvious, it does not mean that it is unimportant. In this book, I help to fill this void. The next chapter describes how the primary research was designed and implemented.

Chapter Two

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

In this book, data collected from two 'e-zines' has been drawn upon. This has been analysed using descriptive frame analysis (Chapters Three and Five) and framed discourse analysis (Chapter Four) techniques. Both methods are variations of a frame analysis approach. In this chapter, the methodological and philosophical issues which emerged in the research design, data collection and analysis are presented. The chapter begins by looking at the research design and methodological choices that were available to answer the research aim and objectives. After this, the reasons for choosing e-zine messageboard discourse as a data source are revealed before moving on to the 'data analysis' section, where the difficulties in capturing collective identifications are explored. Also, the chapter explains how/why a frame analysis approach was selected by looking at its theoretical and practical advantages/disadvantages. The chapter begins with the issues which emerged in the research design.

METHODOLOGICAL CHOICES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Bulmer (1984) there are two broad paths that a researcher can take with his/her work. First, there is the library-based option, which synthesises existing research and theory and, second, there are more empirical research projects, which involve either working with primary data sources or analysing existing information.

My understanding is that in many cases, this separation is exaggerated in that empirical research is rarely atheoretical and may even be driven by theory. Indeed, this book is best considered as a *theoretically informed piece of empirical research*, which therefore avoids what Giulianotti's refers to as 'armchair theorising' (1999: 170).

It was decided at the beginning of the research project that this research would be based upon empirical data. In principle, this threw up two main options. The first was a quantitative approach, which uses numbers as a way of describing macro-social trends. This type of research relies upon large sample sizes as statistics are only useful if the numbers of survey participants are not too small. It can prove to be very expensive and time consuming to construct a new, well-sampled, dataset which means that many quantitative graduate and other small scale projects rely upon 'secondary data analysis', which describes a scrutiny of an existing dataset (Rose and Sullivan 1993).²⁹ Thomas (1996) suggests that secondary data analysis is both time and cost effective, especially in the age of computer assisted inquiry. However, a disadvantage of secondary quantitative data analysis is that researchers sometimes only deconstruct the dataset which has already been aggregated. Therefore, this form of inquiry may only *describe* the social world rather than actively engaging with it. Although there is immense value in the tangibility of statistics, it was decided that a quantitative-based book could not be shaped around the attitudes which emerge from football cultures because no convincing datasets currently exist in the public domain which look at such issues.

²⁹ Such as the British Household Panel Survey

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A second approach uses qualitative methods, which often involves gathering data through interviews, observations, ethnographic research and documentary evidence. Qualitative forms of inquiry usually involve a smaller number of cases than quantitative projects. It was decided very early in the research design stage to use qualitative methods to describe the supporter culture, because it was felt that the approach would explore fan perceptions at depth. However, the first task in developing this process was to consider how collective identifications are best measured or described.

Capturing Collective Identifications

Melucci (1995; 1996) argues that collective identities are notoriously difficult to research because they are not a 'thing' but a process of construction, through active social relationships (1995: 58). This means that a researcher must first believe that an abstract culture exists before he/she can explore its existence. This abstract notion of group culture is recognised by Jenkins (2002: 12) who also argues that collective identifications are difficult to research:

In our everyday lives we participate, as embodied individuals, who are easy to see, to touch, to taste, and so on. They are tangible, three-dimensional, distinct from each other, and very material. They act, they speak, they eat, they copulate, they dance, and so on. Collectivities, however, are much less visible or tangible. They do not 'act' in the same way. Other than their constituent individuals, they do not eat or copulate or whatever. Thus in a number of respects collectivities have a distinctive ontological status; they simply do not exist in the same way that individual humans can be said to exist.

Johnston (1995) argues that collective identity researchers must seek to capture the culture which emerges in group interaction. Melucci (1995; 1996) suggests that there are three main ways that this can be done. First, he argues that the most common technique is to watch the behaviours of previously defined collective identities such as

movements, protests and mobilisations through either participant or non-participant observation methods. Second, he suggests that group cultures can also be understood by coming to terms with the perceptions, representations and values of members within the collective. To do this, discourse generated by members of the group must be analysed and information about the group's identities and identifications must be garnered. Third, he argues that collective identities can be measured by large-scale quantitative analysis, which refers to the utilisation of data produced by members of the public filling out questionnaires which are then aggregated and analysed. In actual fact, none of the three suggestions counter the problems Jenkins (2002) has with the abstract nature of group identifications, but each may be taken as indications that group cultures exist. However, because the most empirical answer that a researcher can offer when looking at collective identifications is to look at its effects (which are diffuse and present in all human societies), group culture studies have to heavily rely upon previous research and social theory to make sense of observed findings. With this in mind, I would like to reiterate that this is a *theoretically informed piece of empirical research*.

Of the three examples, I discounted using a large amount of quantitative survey data for reasons previously explained. However, the idea of monitoring the physical actions and discourses of supporter groups is more feasible, given that they are based upon qualitative methods. These ideas will now be explored and Figure 2.01 (see Appendix) has been developed to assist with this.

Beginning with understanding physical actions, Swidler (1995) argues that collective identities can be described by monitoring the way group culture is socially

constructed around the ritualistic worship of symbols. She argues that groups are defined by the way members act toward symbols, which concretises a 'collective consciousness' that exists over and above individual action. Thus, a way of measuring collective identifications would be to interpret the meanings of rituals which reflect upon how individuals think about themselves. Swidler (1995: 28-9) further argues that cultural analysts have monitored collective identities by examining social practices. Swidler uses Bourdieu's (1977) notion of the habitus to argue that group culture, as represented by group actions, are sets of habits, styles and skills that are internalised to become social attitudes and values. Hence, Swidler argues that social researchers can gather data which gives clues about collective identities by looking to group practices and asking what shapes such behaviours. Indeed, Melucci (1995: 44) viewed this as the essence of group values, given that he argued collective identities construct action systems which define the group's 'ends, means and fields of action'. Therefore Melucci suggest that a way of researching collectivities is to understand the goals which describe their existence.

A second way of considering identity construction is to look at a social group's performativities. This type of action offers productive insights into the process of identification expression. The work of Goffman (1959) is instrumental in this understanding because he saw one dimension of identity/identification as given through performance. In his 'dramaturgical model', Goffman argued that identities are performed in both 'front-stage' and 'back-stage' areas (Goffman 1959). Front-stage identities are those that are performed to other individuals and are inherently public. On stage performances may include 'props' which are external objects that assist individuals, as they carry out social actions or perform roles. Back-stage

actions are not conventionally performances in that they are identities which are spent in isolation, away from the public stage. Personal issues may first emerge and be dealt with there. Therefore, back-stage, actors may prepare for their public performances. This means that all public identities/identifications are acted out, even if some performances are more convincing than others. As identities take on a process nature, actors can project new identities, where, if the performance is convincing, they become seen as new facets of the individual's character. However, if the performance is not convincing, a 'spoiled identity' is created which means that it is very difficult for the actor to be legitimated in similarly-themed future performances. Although Goffman designed his theory around the actions of individuals, there is no reason why social actors within collective identities cannot publicly perform in ways that are typical of a group culture to gain peer acceptance. Therefore, performance actions are one way in which collective identities can be observed.

Butler (1990) also believes that identities are conferred through performances, although she also ties action to discourse. For instance, Butler explains that 'performative acts are forms of authoritative speech; and most performances, for instance, are statements that, in the uttering, also perform a certain action and exercising power' (1995: 225). She argued that both an act and its description may be simultaneously given (for instance, 'with this ring I thee wed' at wedding ceremonies). Hence, Butler's way of measuring identities would be to observe performances and discourse. However, in the case of collective identities, Jenkins (2002: 12) argues that individual members are hardly ever found in the same place. This makes it very difficult to monitor collective actions in this way. It was decided

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that collective identifications would be monitored through the discourse members produce because if an identity/identification-configuring communication space could be found; there was a greater chance that discourse could be accurately interpreted than other behavioural activities.

A problem that Jenkins (2002: 29) had with the idea of society was that he found those who suppose its existence to be 'smug'. While not arguing against the existence of social groups, he believed that this had to be justified. The amorphous term 'culture' defines collective identities/identifications and societies, yet there is validity in Jenkins' claim that the existence of both must be questioned. Society can be treated conceptually in more than one way, for instance, a set of people; concrete institutions and activities; roles and relationships; rules and other forms of control, or shared meanings. Hence, society is largely seen as socially constructed through symbolic activities, and the production of discourse constitutes one important version of this which can be captured.

Discourse

The term 'discourse' has been a central theme in contemporary social theory, although its meaning is contested; it has a wide range of connotations which are dependent upon the theoretical and methodological framework in which it is positioned. At a broad level, 'discourses' are the frameworks in which humans organise, interpret and change their social world. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) understood discourse to flatten in-group cultural differences as it develops the meanings which social relations crystallise around. By providing a framework in which human beings understand

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their worlds, discourses assign meaning to objects and therefore structure human behaviour.

Alternatively, Foucault (1980) saw discourse and power as inseparable, in that power is not just attached to the institutions or the 'powerful' but is diffuse across discursive sites (which he viewed as a system of representation). He saw representation as including the discourses, signifying practices and symbolic systems through which cultures and identities/identifications are constituted. The role of structure was important in this, as he interpreted it to be created by language and expressed through power relations. However, Foucault also argues that discourses can be contested through opposing codes of understanding. This means that the power relations are not static. Similarly, Althusser (1971) argued that discourses are socially constructed and need the engagement of active human subjects. Therefore, ideologies are socially constructed through language, but once created, guide human cultures. The study of discourse allows researchers to look at social groups and individuals within a society and illuminate the complexities of language as both constraining and facilitating identities. For these reasons, 'discourse' has been chosen as a focus to research the collective identifications of the two groups of football supporters.

Case studies: Liverpool and Oldham Athletic

Once it was decided to carry out a piece of *theoretically informed empirical research* based around fan discourses, it was necessary to select two cases to study at depth. Thus, the discourses amongst Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans were observed. A case study is an in-depth examination of a particular place or practice, which can be understood in relation to a particular social context (see David 2006; Denscombe

1998; Erlandson *et al.* 1993; Innes 2001). Case studies are common to many PhD research projects, as they provide a strong *particular* argument (Punch 1998). A potential weakness associated to the approach is that it is uncertain whether the generated results can be generalised beyond the specific context. Innes (2001) argues that whilst case study research produces empirically rich data, it is not possible to comment on the resonance of the results beyond the case example. On the other hand, David (2006) argues the opposite, namely that case study findings can be applied to other similar contexts, providing that the selected examples are 'typical'. It is debatable that any case study is 'typical', for instance, in the specific example of a football, there is no such 'typical' club, as all have their particular intricacies. At the same time, Innes' (2001) argument can be equally criticised, as some elements of case study research can help us to understand the wider social world because there are *processes* which occur in one particular case which are applicable in other examples. If this were not true, many pieces of sociological research would have their 'usefulness' reduced in that findings could not be applied to emergent projects (for example, literature review discussions would be almost worthless). On this basis, whilst the results of a case study should be treated with some caution, many findings may be important in the wider research arena.

There are similarities and differences between the cases of Liverpool and Oldham Athletic and such tensions have made comparisons interesting. The first similarity is that both teams are based in north-west England which means that they share similar geography and local media sources. Second, both towns have experienced local ethnic tensions. For example, Liverpool has significant proportions of Afro-Caribbean and

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Irish descendents³⁰ and in the 1980s many amongst the local population felt a sense of alienation from 'Thatcher's England' (Taeffe and Mulhearn 1988), which was one reason for the 1981 Toxteth riots/uprisings (see Chapter Three). Oldham – a de-industrialised former mill town located about 50 miles away from Liverpool – is discernible because in recent years it has suffered with racism against its Asian descent population and has a recent history of British National Party (BNP) local election success, which accentuated after the 2001 riots/uprisings.

The BNP and local politics

To elaborate, the BNP have received increasing support in the early part of the twentieth century, and Oldham has been central to this because Nick Griffin scored significantly in the Oldham West and Royton seat in the 2001 British Parliamentary election (Archer 2001; Renton 2005: 27). Indeed, the 16.4 per cent he acquired in this election is the highest ever vote for a far-Right party in a British General election.

It can only be speculated as to why Oldham has proved to be a heartland for BNP propaganda as Hussain and Bagguley (2005: 408) argue that other, northern, old industrial towns that have suffered similar political contours have done so for multiple reasons (for instance in Bradford and Burnley). However, two main reasons seem to reoccur. The first addresses the issue of ethnically segregated communities.

According to figures produced by the *Commission for Racial Equality* (2005), Oldham's 'Asian' or 'Asian British' population accounts for 11.88 per cent of the local population. This is in contrast to Liverpool, in which the similar group accounts

³⁰ For details of migration into Liverpool, see Taeffe and Mulhearn (1988) and Murphy (1995).

for 1.10 per cent, and the North-West of England as a whole (3.42 per cent).³¹ The white population accounts for 86.14 per cent of the local population, which is proportionately lower than Liverpool, at 94.32 per cent and the North West, at 94.44 per cent. The *Oldham Independent Review* (2001) highlights housing segregation as a particularly embedded problem, in that residential areas often define school choices which means that children grow up in consistently segregated environments. The review argues that this aids the build up of ignorance of other communities, from which unsubstantiated fears develop. The second issue is high unemployment. In Oldham, Bradford and Burnley unemployment rates have risen as the UK has de-industrialised. This means that the cotton mills which, according to the *Oldham Independent Review* (2001), many white Oldham residents would work in through the day, and many of the 'Asian' descent population would do likewise through the night, have ceased to operate. According to the *Annual Population Survey* (April 2004-March 2005), this has left 4.8 per cent of the local population unemployed. Whilst this represents the national average and is considerably smaller than Liverpool's unemployment figure of 8.2 per cent (*Annual Population Survey* April 2004-March 2005) it masks an unemployment rate which approaches 50 per cent for young 'Asians' (Kundnani 2002: 106). From the perspective of the local white population, the increased unemployment rate has allowed the BNP to stir hostilities by mobilising discontent using the 'illegitimate competitors' frame (i.e. 'Asians-descents are illegitimately taking *our* jobs') whilst also creating animosity from the unemployed Asian descents. Also, Ray and Smith (2001) argue that the BNP's position in Oldham was strengthened by local media reports which flagged crime committed by youths of Asian descent in early 2001. Ray and Smith suggest that such reportage did not

³¹ Source: *Commission for Racial Equality* (2005).

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problematise the nature of such arrests, nor did it ask critical questions relating to institutional racism within Greater Manchester Police which may have partially led to the high number of arrests.

Pertinently, Renton (2004: 79; 2005: 27) has argued that the BNP have also cited the passionate (and largely non-Asian) arena of football to further mobilise local hostilities to non-whites in Oldham. This proved to be the spark which ignited intense local hostilities (which led to Griffin's 2001 General Election success). To explain, on 28th April 2001, a second division football match between Stoke City and Oldham Athletic was scheduled to take place in the town. It is important to note that Stoke City fans had a prolonged reputation for racist hooliganism and police expected trouble but in the run-up to the fixture, Asian shops had received threatening phone calls. Immediately before the game, pubs in Oldham filled up with Stoke City supporters and many chanted racist abuse (Lowles 2001). A large number of young Asian men responded to this threat, only to see the racists escorted to the match. This left a hostile stand-off between the police and local residents as the NF and racist gangs had used the pretext of the football match to create social disorder – therefore using football as a vehicle to drive racism. Adding substance to reports was that Oldham Athletic's average attendance that season was 4972, yet this game attracted around 9359 supporters.

On 5th May 2001, one week after the game, a full scale riot erupted, whilst similar events also unfolded in Bradford and Burnley. The total number of arrests from the three towns was around 400 (Hussein and Bagguley 2005: 408). Kundnami (2001: 105) argues that these riots were markedly different those which erupted in the early

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1980s (including Toxteth, Liverpool in 1981) in that whilst the earlier riots were aimed at overcoming racist policing measures and the oppressive rule of the Thatcher government, the contemporary riots mostly pitted social groups against each other. It is Kundnani's (2001: 110) argument that the 2001 riots created Oldham's 'cycle of distrust', in which those of Asian descent became sensitive and hostile to white criticisms, therefore increasing their likelihood of acting illegally and irresponsibly. These actions further reinforced negative stereotypes about young Asian men in Oldham. As a result of this, Kundnani (2001) and Archer (2001: 578) suggest that the BNP benefited most from these events.

On the other hand, the BNP have not experienced the same success in Liverpool. As will be considered in Chapter Three, the Toxteth uprisings/riots in 1981 were largely against the Thatcher-led government and helped to polarise Liverpool from the rest of England in the minds of many Liverpool supporters. Even today, Liverpool is highly militant and largely opposed to the Conservative party. Whilst the BNP is not supported locally, it is not immediately visible, having never seriously threatened to control of any seats in Liverpool. To illustrate this point, in the 2004 local elections, Joseph Owens stood for election in the Norris Green constituency. Yet, Taylor (2004b) points out that whilst Owens was campaigning, he allegedly assaulted a student. As a result, Owens received negative local press coverage and did not seriously threaten to take the seat from the Labour Party. Thus, whilst the BNP have a local presence in Oldham, they do not in Liverpool.

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Playing success

A further difference between the two case studies is the varying playing success between the two clubs. For instance, despite the 1990s success of regional rivals Manchester United, Liverpool is still regarded by many to be the most successful English football club in national and European competitions. Liverpool has won 18 (pre-Premiership/Premier League) League Championships (the last was in 1989/90); six FA Cups; six League Cups; five European Cups/Champions Leagues and three UEFA Cups (the most recent was 2000/1). During the data collection period, Liverpool won the 2004/5 Champions League. It is also a founder of 'G14': a lobby group of European 'superclubs' who have clustered together in order to challenge their national associations and the international football bodies of FIFA and UEFA for a greater say in the way football is run (see Chapter Six).

On the other hand, while Oldham Athletic was also a founder member of the Premier League (1992/3), it no longer competes in the English top division.³² Rather, during the data collection period, it resided in the third tier of English football ('League One'). It has also never qualified for UEFA club competition and has suffered financial hardship in recent years, highlighted by its bankruptcy order in 2003. As a response, a 'Supporters Trust' was formed and bought a seat on the management and administrative board, which means that they have a say in the everyday running of the club (see Chapter Six). The choice of case study clubs was not entirely random. Liverpool was chosen because I wanted to test King's arguments about European superclub fan attitudes beyond his case example of Manchester United; Liverpool was fit for this purpose, having now won five European Cup/Champions League titles. As

³² Oldham Athletic was relegated from the Premier League in 1993-94 – the second year of the leagues existence – and has yet to return.

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a comparison, Oldham Athletic was chosen for the reason that it is not a European superclub and is geographically close to both Liverpool (this book) and Manchester (King's research). It was also suspected that the strong local presence of the BNP might exaggerate the results, which meant that claims about non-European superclub fan attitudes in their most accentuated form.

Thinking about data collection strategies

Qualitative research, such as those studies based upon in depth cases, often require researcher empathy to *understand* and *interpret* their subject's social world. This was certainly the case in this research, as it was felt that a close relationship with subjects had to be achieved to access the embedded identifications which formed the supporter culture. For this reason, a relationship which stretched beyond a couple of interviews had to be built. An ethnographic study seemed to be the obvious form of inquiry, especially given King's (2000; 2003) Manchester United fan research used such methods. In its deepest sense, ethnographic research involves the researcher fully immersing him/herself into the research field. In principle, this gives a rich seam of data, although there are clear problems associated to the reliability of field notes because they are unlikely to be instantaneously recorded. Neither the time nor financial resources were available to undertake two full, 'real life' ethnographic case studies, so other ways of adequately researching fan cultures had to be uncovered. The first potential answer went against my initial hunch, in that I thought that a series of in-depth interviews with a small number of fans from each club might be a suitable data collection strategy. This raised important issues about the way such supporters would be located and accessed. My early thoughts were to advertise for participants in programmes and fanzines. However, this method was rejected because it was

uncertain who might answer the advert, and so impacted upon the ethical issue of personal researcher safety. My second idea was to approach fanzine editors with a view to researching their fan groups. The advantage using fanzine editors as a source of data was that it could be immediately classify as a *type* of fan, given that there had been previous research conducted on such supporters.

This was interesting given that Malcolm *et al.* (2000: 131) have pointed out that fanzine producers and consumers are not representative of football crowds in general and according to Giulianotti (2002), Johnstone (1999: 178) and King (2000; 2003), supporters who produce fanzines are amongst the most highly committed.³³ This meant that the processes experienced by 'fanzine fans' would be more exaggerated than other supporters; so, while the results would not be entirely representative, they would demonstrate supporter cultures in arguably their most exaggerated form. Therefore Steve Kelly, the editor of the long-standing Liverpool fan-magazine, *Through the Wind and Rain (TTW&R)* and Pete Mason, who was his equivalent at Oldham Athletic's *Beyond the Boundary (BTB)* were contacted. I met the former a number of times, usually watching Liverpool's televised European 'away' football matches (Steve Kelly has a fear of flying). He and his friends were aware that I was

³³ Boyle (2004) argues that the classification of football fans into types is a form of 'fascism'. This is undoubtedly an overstatement but he argues that all too often supporters who might not have been born in the town concerned, might not go to away matches or might not go to home matches are seen to have unauthentic loyalties. Boyle further argues such a label often becomes attached to those fans that have not been attending games for a long period of time or may not have been introduced to the club through patri-lineage. Thus, Boyle argues that such traditional fans are increasingly fewer: to an extent he is correct in that the way in which people become fans may have become more diverse than in bygone years and this has not been fully acknowledged in social research. To elaborate, Boyle (*ibid*) questions whether it is really correct to imply that anyone is 'less' of a fan for not attending games? He thinks not, 'the fan who emigrated in the 1980s that still gets up at 2am to see matches on TV... [and] the fan that simply can't afford to go to games anymore, such is the increasing cost of attending matches' simply cannot be labelled as an unauthentic fan (*ibid*: 3). Further, he argues that to feel football's associated emotions (i.e. elation upon victory, dejection after defeat and depression after relegation) are the only elements which define a 'real' football fan. These points are wholly acknowledged, but the research will continue to focus upon fanzine/e-zine producers who tend to be defined as 'traditional' fans.

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conducting research based upon our meetings – they were aware of the research process given that a former PhD Sociology student at Liverpool University used to co-edit the fanzine – and gave their informed consent. All members of the group were very welcoming and responsive to my questions. A rapport was quickly established and we spoke freely about Liverpool, Europe and on their invitation, the club I support, Wigan Athletic (who were in the process of experiencing a season which would see them promoted to the Premiership). However, small amounts of alcohol were always consumed in the field and this made the writing up of notes more difficult. To counter this, I thought about tape recording the interviews/focus groups carried out on the group but decided against this because it would threaten the rapport which had formed, in that the fan-group would be less comfortable in my company if a tape recorder was introduced to the environment. Emails were regularly exchanged with members of the group, but these highlighted conversations between two people: the researcher and one participant and so did not reliably describe collective identifications in the way group discourse might. Although I did not meet Pete Mason, we exchanged a number of emails and I sensed that my relationship to him and his friends would develop in much the same way. He was very much aware of my allegiance to Wigan Athletic, a team who many Oldham Athletic fans define as rivals, but still seemed happy to help. This led to a major research decision being made to move away from this type of research because the recording of data felt, in one extreme, *unnatural* and in the other, *unreliable*. While I continued to meet with the Liverpool group, other sources of data which could be utilised were thought of and the idea of using fanzine articles and e-zine messageboard comments was conceived.

DATA COLLECTION

Initially, centring upon fanzine articles seemed to be the most fruitful idea, because both Duke (1991) and Jary *et al.* (1991) had previously demonstrated that fanzines are quite literally independent 'fan magazines' which are made by fans and reflect the current sporting and other issues in a humorous way (see also Haynes 1995; Johnstone 1999: 179; Redhead 1987; Thornton 2003). I thought that this would make fanzine articles an extremely useful data source.

Through my regular contact with Steve Kelly, I found that the editors of the three key Liverpool fanzines: *Through the Wind and Rain (TTW&R)*; *Red All Over the Land (RAOTL)* and *The Liverpool Way (TLW)* were all part of the same friendship group and fan network. This meant that it made little difference where each of the Liverpool articles was published. There was just one Oldham Athletic fanzine (*BTB*) which meant that there was significantly more Liverpool-orientated data.³⁴

A large collection of sixteen years (1989-2005) worth of both clubs fanzines was purchased for under £400. Individual editions were found in various places. First, fanzine editors sold back issues of their publications; second, rarer editions were bought (for larger sums of money) from specialist fanzine dealers, and third, others were picked up very cheaply on the Internet marketplace *Ebay*. Generally, £400 represented extremely good value because sixteen years worth of fanzines for both clubs had been gathered and an offline ethnographic field research which stretched a similar period of time would be too long for a piece of doctoral research, with the estimated monetary costs too high. Given that I had not witnessed the articles being

³⁴ At the end of the 2004/5 season, *Beyond the Boundary* ceased production (at 100 issues) and for the sake of research consistency, the collection of Liverpool fanzines stopped at the same point.

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written but found them in a finished format, the data collection approach was considered as a form of documentary sourcing.

Using e-zines: Finding an untapped source

Despite this interest in fanzines, e-zine comments had also been collected as an additional information source. E-zines are best considered as a developing part of fanzine culture, in that they are the electronic editions of paper fanzines or are online fanzines in their own right. According to Nash (1999; 2000), a major reason why fanzines are sociologically interesting in the study of football fandom is that they offer a democratic arena for the socio-cultural and political concerns of the collective group of fans to be aired. Johnstone (1999: 178-9) consolidates Nash's argument by suggesting that 'fanzines have a political dimension, even if not in the party political sense ... as well as discussing the team, board, supporters and authorities'. E-zines heighten the discursive dimension of fanzines by providing online messageboards on which any fan can leave comments and debate with his/her fellow supporters. I had been particularly interested in the potential of e-zines as a research tool since beginning to use Wigan Athletic's online fanzine 'cockneylatic' whilst studying undergraduate research methods courses in 2000.³⁵ Yet, there has been very little sociological research conducted on football e-zines, even though Boyle and Haynes (2004: 141-2) have argued that:

³⁵Online football communities are often imagined and many members also choose to use pseudonym/pen/nick names rather than real or identifiable names. This does not mean that the boundaries of the group are illegitimate for two reasons. First, as considered in Chapter One, Anderson (1983) argues that some of the strongest communities – such as nationalism – are imagined, given that all members do not actually know each other, and second, relating to the issue of anonymity, Alexander and Smith (1993) argue that even in the tightest group cultures it is possible that members may not divulge a great deal about their personal lives outside of the group and this may not illegitimate their group membership status. Infact despite the potential question marks about the authenticity of the e-zine community, I stopped posting on 'cockneylatic' because I found the group to be too closely knit for my personal tastes in that many group rituals had to be undertaken before members gained full acceptance.

Much like the explosion of football fanzines in the late 1980s fan websites, or e-zines are created from a labour of love motivated by passion and heavily tied to the construction of cultural identities. As with the fanzine phenomenon most are not-for-profit and produced outside of work hours. The dispersal of new media production has therefore opened up a whole new communicative space for football fans.

There is a clear link between fanzines and e-zines, especially in those cases where the e-zine is simply the online continuation of the fanzine. Therefore, although there are some e-zines which are almost exclusively used by non-football match going fans (for instance those which have been setup by fans who do not live in the UK) there are also fanzines produced by such fans. This type of e-zine and fanzine was avoided because I wanted to look at only *traditional* supporters.

Giulianotti (2002: 33-4), King (1998: 91-5), Redhead (1997) and Sandvoss (2003) all agree that *traditional* form of fandom principally exist through match day attendance and these fans are different to *consumer-type* supporters who show looser attachments.³⁶ Thus, football support plays a big part in traditional fans' identities in social contexts which are not immediately related to sport (Haynes 1995; Johnstone 1999: 206; Redhead 1991). Traditional fans are also what Redhead (1997) terms 'active' supporters. These fans have moved beyond any consumerist paradigm which Redhead (1997) and King (2002 [1998]) have argued has developed in the post-Premiership era and are therefore highly unlikely to ever change club allegiance (Crawford 2004). Those who are part of this group are classed as active because they are likely to want to safeguard the long-term future of their club, and if the need arose, would be likely to form Independent Supporter Associations (ISAs)/Supporters'

³⁶ Giulianotti (2002) argues that a supporter is the most committed type of fan, through frequent match attendance, which means that he/she makes a long term personal and emotional investment in the club.

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Trusts (Giulianotti 1999). ISAs may act for two reasons, first to protest against unwelcome projected club takeovers or second, to provide financial assistance when it is most needed (which was the case with many lower division clubs, including Oldham Athletic, after the collapse of the 'ITV digital' television deal in 2002). According to Redhead (1987; 1991) and Haynes (1995) the relationship between the 'politics of football' and fanzines has been traditionally interwoven, while Reimer (2004) argues that fanzines and, increasingly, e-zines are involved in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century power struggle between football supporters and their clubs' corporate interests.

E-zine contributors (like those of fanzines) define themselves as a group by ritually coming together to become a tight (often imagined) community of similar minded individuals (Crawford 2004: 144-5; 159; Stoneman 2001: 34-5). By doing this, e-zine producers' performativities develop a 'group style' which exists above the level of individuals. This creates a patterned and durable culture (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003: 737). As briefly touched upon, e-zines are very different to fanzines in one crucial sense, they provide 'messageboards' upon which supporters can talk and debate particular issues. This advancement of interactivity provides the opportunity for 'expressive individualism' (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003: 755) in which the pervasive group structure of e-zines may be broken. Therefore, according to Eliasoph and Lichterman's template (2003: 756), comments are not absolutely homogenous on the same messageboard. When two opposing viewpoints were made, two possible outcomes emerged, first, the most common result was that discourse was reinterpreted to create group consensus. When this is not possible, an opportunity may be given to the supporter to rescind his/her statement before the issue is forgotten. On the other

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hand, the fan may not so easily be forgiven and his/her comments may be criticised, mocked, politely tolerated or completely shunned as a result. As a group outsider, the offensive comments did not seem as controversial as some seemingly inoffensive statements given by popular posters. In such cases, it seemed as if supporters looked for reasons to argue with less popular members within the group. Therefore, although e-zines are democratic in so far as all fans are entitled to their own opinions, not all supporter voices have equal power.

Throughout the research, I drew upon data from two e-zines. These were:

- *Red All Over the Land – online (RAOTL)*
- *JK Latics (JKL)*

The choice of one e-zine for each club is balanced and also produced a similar number of comments over the sample period. *RAOTL* is an electronic version of a paper fanzine while *JKL* was the main Oldham Athletic e-zine and many *BTB* producers/consumers used it. *JKL* is a subunit of the national 'Rivals' e-zine group, of which Liverpool's *Shankly Gates* is part. However, a conscious decision was taken to exclude *Shankly Gates* from the research as messageboard contributors were not prepared to divulge any personal demographic details and seemed not to regularly attend Liverpool matches. Overall, the e-zine user details could not be checked to any level of certainty, which Ruddock (2005) also found in his study of e-zine West Ham United supporters. Nevertheless, Sandvoss (2003) argues that such demographic details are not always vitally important when sport fans are being researched, as the collective experience of 'being a fanatic' may consume other facets of identity. That

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said, during the sample period, many supporters gave clear indications about their personal lives and from this, it is reasonable to assume that fans were similar in that they were active supporters (and might be reasonably referred to as fanatical), often male and mostly either from the same town/city as the football club, or keen to stress that they had historical/cultural roots in the urbanity.

The e-zine data was collected over a fourteen month period, which spanned 1st April 2004 to 31st May 2005. This period of time may be considered atypical, given that Liverpool won its fifth European Champions League title during it. It was also important to note that the 2004 European Championships were held during the sample period, which may also mark the time-span as untypical. However, given that every extended period of time has events which distinguish it, it is uncertain what an average fourteen months would consist of. Initially, a sample period which ran from the end of the 2003/4 season to the finishing point of 2004/5 was due to be gleaned. Therefore, it was anticipated that the data collection would be carried out between the first week of May 2004 and the first week of May 2005. However, to make any sense of the events at the end of 2003/4, it was necessary to move back the data collection point to April 2004. As the beginning of May 2005 approached, Liverpool qualified for the 2005 Champions League final, which meant that its season did not end until 25th May. Therefore, it was decided to absorb this into the sample period, so that a full season's results were gathered. Data was usually collected a few weeks after the comments were made. Initially, this was done by printing e-zine comments. An analysis of the data using 'pencil and paper' methods was originally planned, however, as the boxes of messageboard comments rapidly grew, so did the chances of data misplacement. Therefore a decision was made to electronically store the data.

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At the beginning of the data collection period, a pilot study was conducted to test if e-zines would be a good source of data. Therefore, data was gathered during the 2004 European Championships as a 'test case'. This was presented at two conferences later that summer, largely to a warm response. Since then, Ruddock (2005) has published research which uses data from West Ham United's *Knees Up Mother Brown* fansite messageboard, which helps to further justify the choice of data source.

At the end of data collection, such a wealth of evidence had been accumulated that all of it did not need to be analysed in this project. Therefore it was decided that the paper fanzines would be retained for 'future research' and only one quarter of the messageboard discourse would be analysed. The omission of the fanzine data meant that claims to produce a longitudinal piece of research were lost. This meant that the issue of whether the Champions League had made Liverpool fans *more European* and Oldham Athletic supporters *less European* could not be answered. This potential loss was compensated for because the smaller sample meant that the data could be more accurately analysed. It was decided that comments would be selected by generating a random sample based upon the date in which the 'thread' ended. To explain, a messageboard 'thread' is the group of e-zine comments which are given under the same title (and therefore often discuss the same issue, although the theme of the conversation can change as comments are reinterpreted). The random sample was drawn from 426 days, which was the number of days in the selected fourteen months, and was produced by dividing 426 by four to give a random sample of 106.5. This was then rounded to 107 days. An individual number (up to 426) was then assigned to each day during the fourteen months and using a random number generator, 107 different numbers were gathered. The days that the numbers were attached to became

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the random sample days. The decision to use one quarter of all days was taken because, even though various books on social statistics recommend different sampling levels, it seemed as if 107 out of 426 days was deemed to be a large sample size. The selected days are included in Table 2.02 (see appendix).

Virtual ethnography

As e-zines have grown from the fanzine movement, the generated discourse was first considered to be a piece of documentary evidence. Finnegan (1996), Chamberlayne (2000) and MacDonald (2001: 200) all argue that documentary sources (such as diaries) are good data sources for identity/identification research because they represent personal narratives which reflect personal and social changes. It was thought that e-zines would be best understood in relation to this literature because they form a type of collective diary, which tell stories about the monitored group. Indeed, Duke (1991: 637) argues that fanzines 'provide a rich archaeology of texts that are representative of the collective identities of traditional football fans' (echoed in Giulianotti 1999: 61-3; Redhead 1991a: 149-51); I believed that e-zines should be considered in the same way. Although there is value in this analogy, it is probably better to argue that the collection and analysis of fourteen months worth of e-zine comments goes beyond collective diary accounts and is best considered as a form of ethnography. This is justified in two ways. First, there are criticisms of documentary sources which are not applicable to an extended e-zine collection. For instance, according to May (1993), a common criticism concerns the possibility that the documents may carry a heavy journalistic bias. This may mean that the data source is not necessarily a true representation of a body of public opinion or that 'facts' have been tailored to fit an argument. However, football e-zines make no claims to

objectivity and are proud to offer subjective accounts (Stoneman 2001).³⁷ Additionally, both MacDonald (2001: 205) and Mason (1996: 75) argue that a potential problem with all documentary evidence is whether those selected 'constitutes a representative sample of the universe of documents as they originally existed' (MacDonald 2001: 205). A selection of a few e-zine comments from a relatively short number of days would justify this concern, but this was clearly not the case in this project. Also, Finnegan (1996: 144) argues that a diarist may be writing a diary with an eye to later publication possibilities and this may affect how various events are reported as the author aims to 'create the right impression'. This is not the case with e-zines because it is impossible to contemplate that Internet messageboard comments would be published without any analysis, although it is possible that e-zine supporters may be producing unrealistic 'managed identities' (cf. Goffman 1959) in the hope of impressing their fellow fans. The second reason why it is preferable to call the data collection strategy a form of ethnography was formed after reading Christine Hine's pioneering *Virtual Ethnography* (2000). In this book, Hine shows how she immersed herself in an online news discussion group as she monitored the case of Louise Woodward, the British nanny who was controversially found guilty of unintentionally killing an American baby in 1997, and created a new research approach which she referred to as 'virtual ethnography'.

The above term can equally apply to this research for a number of reasons. First, the way Hine approached her research was very similar to the way I carried out my data collection in that she observed online discussion. She found that a specific advantage

³⁷ Indeed, many underlying philosophical questions which have pertained sociological inquiries have centred upon the question of whether there is actually an 'objective' truth to the complex social world at all; e-zines can only make claims to represent the subjective opinions of those who they represent – a body of committed football supporters.

of her approach was that she could engage with the group at the same time in depth and accurate field notes were being compiled by her participants as they discussed the case. This is precisely what was found. Whereas when I met Steve Kelly, it was difficult to make accurate field notes, in this instance they were being transcribed at the point of inception. In many respects, this represents an ideal way of making field notes. Second, Hine felt that by observing the discursive interaction between group members, a high level of in-group culture was able to be monitored. Once again, this was applicable to this book. Yet, Hine's view that that an ethnographer must shape the discussion and so a virtual ethnographer must contribute to online discourse, is questionable. Her claim is problematic because there is a 'validity argument' appeal in watching online fans behaviour without interviewer intervention. Therefore, the common term which messageboard contributors would use to define my behaviour was a 'lurker', that is, somebody who visits the fansite and reads the comments but does not usually contribute their own comments. Turkle (1995) argues that this type of behaviour contravenes web-etiquette, although this was not found to be the case as my presence was detected as a 'visitor' and nobody questioned it. While Hine's argument that an ethnographer must engage with his/her research subjects is understandable, ethnography is equally centred on the issue of closeness to the data at the moment that it is created rather than an active involvement in its generation.

Therefore, passive e-zine 'virtual ethnography' offers the clear advantage of using 'unobtrusive measures' (Webb *et al.* 1966). This refers to the 'ideal methods' (Webb *et al.* 1966: 3) that do not intrude or affect the personal lives of those who are being researched and so they do not change their behaviour accordingly. Thus, unobtrusive measures increase the reliability of the evidence. My research adhered to the cited

'ideals' as e-zine contributors did not know that their testimonies were being used as research evidence and so their comments were not managed in the way they may have been had they been divulging similar information in the interview setting. Inevitably this raises the ethical question of 'is it right use a person's comments without their formal approval?' In most circumstances, the answer would probably be 'no', yet, in this study, there were two issues which affect ethical judgement. First, every attempt was made to protect the anonymity of the supporter, in that all contributors were anonymised and are now only referred to as numbers (i.e. Oldham Athletic fan (1)). Indeed, it is important to point out that because this study focuses upon collective identifications, rather than those specifically belonging to individuals, the analysis centres on the frames of discourse (with reference to discursive sequences) rather than the comments made by individual fans. Second, once the e-zine comment has been aired, it becomes the property of the e-zine moderator, who did give permission to use the discourse. Thus, while all participants did not give informed consent, the people who 'own' the information – the e-zine moderators – did. In fact, asking for this permission was probably a sign of courtesy rather than necessity because Internet messageboards exist in the public domain which means that all people can cite the comments that are produced. Nevertheless, permission was gained making the data collection process ethically justifiable.

An additional ethical concern was associated to the treatment of comments, once they had been collected. E-zine messageboards often contain rashly communicated comments, which are sometimes written in a less eloquent manner than if the football fan was filling out a survey, or completing a written account of a football match or other issue. This means that some communications are littered with typographical and

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other grammatical errors, which raises the question of how to deal with such oversights. There are three potential optional ways of treating this data. First, communications can be amended, with all errors corrected and written to a good standard of English. This makes the text instantly readable and provides greater fluency, but it also means that it is no longer solely the product of the research respondent. For this reason, some critical discourse and conversational analysts will refuse to work with 'tampered' data. A second option is to follow any errors/inaccuracies in the text with the word 'sic'. This denotes that researcher has recognised the written fault and means that the actual text has been left unaltered. On the other hand, this approach can make the researcher seem unintentionally patronising. Third, it is possible to leave the text in its original form. This option retains research validity but can make the respondent look slightly foolish, given inevitable typological errors. Yet, because respondents have been anonymised, the decision was made to follow the third option since such errors cannot be easily attached to recognisable individuals. However, it is necessary to point out that supporters' quality of comment expression does not reflect their full abilities to write in a coherent manner.

Elite interviews

The data collection also involved conducting interviews with five key figures in the English and European football industries over an eighteen month period. None of those who were interviewed were prepared to have their identities revealed in this book and so will not be named. However, it is important to note the significance of each interviewee. The first is a chairman of a Football League club, who has overseen his team participate in the Premier League and was heavily involved in drawing up

contingency plans after the collapse of *ITV Digital*. He has also been extremely prominent on a number of FA and Football League advisory boards (and was involved in the 'Football Task Force' in the 1990s). The second is a high profile former Chief Executive of three separate Premier League clubs and carries an established reputation of rescuing football clubs from acute financial positions. The third person works for UEFA and has extensive experience in the marketing and selling rights of the Champions League, whilst the fourth is an important executive of G14. The final person, who I met three times, has a key role in the 'Supporters Direct' movement, which was set up to give advice to those clubs who wish to establish supporters' trusts. Although details provided by each individual helped to shape the understandings of the football industry that are provided in this book, only the G14 executive is quoted directly (in Chapter Six).

According to David and Sutton (2004), interviews can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured in form. In reality, such typologies are slightly misleading and actually many interviews simply fall between the extremes of tightly structured, whereby questions are pre-defined in substance and order, and unstructured interviews, which take the form of a natural conversation with themes rather than questions devised prior to the data collection. Given that the interviews conducted in this part of the research were carried out on highly educated people in the business dimensions of football (rather than football players or fans), literature on 'elite' interviewing strategies was consulted. Lilleker (2003) argues that the first step in carrying out elite interviews is to seek, locate and make contact with individuals who the researcher wishes to interview. In the football industry, it would be difficult to persuade a high profile executive to agree to interview with a novice researcher, given

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that there would be little for him/her to gain from the encounter. However, as a student part-supervised in the 'Football Industries Group' at the University of Liverpool, contacts were already made through its 'guest speaker' programme. Therefore, my research was conducted in the university, after each interviewee had given a seminar to the MBA Football Industries students. When I met my interviewees, it was important to make 'the right impression'. This usually involved donning a suit (which contrasted to the 't-shirt and jeans' attire I wore when meeting up with the fanzine editors) and ensuring that background research had been conducted on each of their organisations. When I met interviewees, I attempted to make each feel comfortable – whilst making sure that I did not create the impression of a sycophant - in order to gain their trust. Before conducting the interview, the aim of my research project was explained, as well as why each was seen to be potentially important to this. It was important to note that each interviewee had situated interests in the football industries – which often clashed with each others and it was important to hide my political allegiances in cases where I disagreed with their ultimate goals. In order to do this, phrases such as 'that was very interesting, could you elaborate a little further...' were used to tease out the richest data on those subjects that interviewees often initially appeared to be a little reticent in talking about. When there was the need to ask critical questions, due care was taken to remove my position of interest. To do this, introductions often involved couching questions with 'I noted in a newspaper article that... I was wondering what your views on this were?' This gave the interviewee the opportunity to tell their side of the story.

The issue of recording such interviews is also worth detailing. Lilleker (2003) argues that the general advice is to establish how interviews will be recorded prior to

interview. This advice was followed and in some cases, interviews were recorded onto a Dictaphone tape, whilst in others, brief notes, which loosely detailed the key points, had to be completed immediately after the interview had ended. Fortunately, the G14 executive who is directly quoted in Chapter Six allowed me to record the interview on the premise that he would not be personally named in this book. The FA and Football League panel member also allowed the interview to be recorded on the premise that the details of the interview would not be sold to the press and, if directly quoted in the book (even under an anonymous identity); he could inspect an advanced draft. Others (such as the UEFA employee) did not allow the interview to be recorded as they wanted to speak completely 'off the record'. To uphold ethical procedures (and good manners), the wishes of all of those interviewed were respected. Given the focus on supporter attitudes, the data taken from these interviews is not analysed in a way which is more rigorous than using selected quotes to illuminate theoretical positions and help to explain fan identifications.

DATA ANALYSIS

Although I chose not to include data from fanzines or any e-zine messageboard comments which fell outside the selected 107 days, this information is still valued because it helped me to spend a necessarily long period of time in the virtual field. This was important because it meant that I could familiarise myself with the environment and discover the discursive rhythms and patterns of communication before analysis commenced. In this section, the operational steps in this process are detailed, by first, considering the frame analysis technique (in both theory and practice), then second, talking about the merits of *NVIVO*, which was used to analyse the data before third, elaborating on themes looked for in the discourse.

Frame analysis

In 1974, Erving Goffman pioneered frame analysis with his book *Frame Analysis: an essay on the organisation of experience*. In this text, he outlined a methodological need to look at the ways in which individuals organise their experiences into meaningful activities and settle on a clear definition of *their* reality. To do this, he particularly focussed upon letters published in newspapers and viewed culture as emerging from discourse. Goffman saw some discourse as more heavily weighted than others and called this form of language a 'frame'. He argued that this group of language is used by individuals to define and talk about situations, rendering 'what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful' (Goffman: 1974: 21).

In this book, frame analysis techniques were used to study e-zine discourse. Yet, frame analysis is far from a perfect tool of analysis. Evans (1997) and Fisher (1997) have both argued that frame analysis is difficult to read, whereas Gamson (1975; 1992; 1995) and Mitzal (2001) suggest that there are very few directions on how to carry out the technique. I found both criticisms to be true as when the method was suggested by colleagues, I began to search the plethora of research methods textbooks to gain an initial foothold. While directions on how to carry out discourse and content analysis were easily found, no book outlined how to practically carry out frame analysis. Therefore, it was decided to look to the original sources, such as Goffman (1974) and the mass of work carried out between Benford, Rochford, Snow and Worden (for instance Benford 1997; Benford and Snow 2000; Snow *et al.* 1986) but this was initially found to be almost impossible to comprehend. It was only when Gamson (1992) and Rydgren's (2003; 2004) practical examples of the utilisation of

the method were located, rather than just methodological descriptions that had previously been found, that the technique began to make sense.

Essentially, frame analysis works by allowing the researcher to interpret how a wide issue – such as *Europe* or immigration - might be talked about and then how the issue may be re-interpreted to take on a new meaning in an emergent discourse. The re-interpretation is based upon the experiences of individuals who contribute to the most recent discourse and how they articulate their feelings in a way which is acceptable to the group. Therefore, Mitzal (2001:320-1) argues that a major use of frame analysis is to look at the processes of collective identities through discourse.

Frame analysis has been used most frequently in political sociological research.³⁸

However, given that many studies in the sociology of sport look at group identities/identifications, it could be used more often in the sub-discipline. Yet, frame analysis has no universal definition (see Benford 1997; Fisher 1997; Triandafyllidou and Fotiou 1998).³⁹ This produces an ill-defined method which some authors have argued many social researchers are too intimidated to use (Druckman 2001; Sceff 2005). Benford (1997: 412) argues that frame analysis allows researchers the freedom to empirically question the extent that the cultural cohesion of groups is socially

³⁸ Some examples of the uses of frame analysis in political sociology include: nuclear power (Gamson 1992); Arab-Israeli conflict (Gamson 1992); the representation of ethnic minorities in the British press (Gardikiotis *et al.* 2004); retirement communities (Lucas 2004); media coverage on European governance (Trenz 2004); Nationalist movements (Billig 1995; Jenson 1995); Women's movements (Taylor and Whitter 1995); reportage of rape cases (Gossett and Byrne 2002); environmental movements (Eder 1996; 2001; Strydom 2002); the rise of genetic toxicology (Frickel 2000); regional identities in Italy (Diani 1996); labour movement trends (Babb 1996) and the potential resonance of religious movements (Evans 1997; Williams 1996).

³⁹ Snow *et al.* (1986) argues that this ambiguity is developed because there are essentially two different meanings of the word 'frame'. The first of these is in its grammatical state, referring to a structure in which meaning is encased and the second, in its indexical sense which is boundary that keeps some elements in view and others out of view, and conveys what is or is not important by grouping certain symbolic elements together.

constructed. Thus, frame analysis presents a way of peeling away the taken-for-granted assumptions and deconstructs everyday meaning. Mitzal (2001) argues that frames allow social actors/groups to impose legibility on the irregularities of social life, which provide a constructed meaning. This means that everyday experiences of the world can be comprehended (Mitzal 2001). In common with Goffman's other theories, frame analysis takes on a social constructivist position, demonstrating that interaction is complex, multiple and the result of social action. However, Collins (1988) suggests that even in its original form, frame analysis avoids complete relativism by taking an epistemological position that the physical world exists in a non-constructed hard reality, which frames of understanding are anchored within. As the application of frame analysis is open to interpretation, different variations of the method have developed. An advantage of frame analysis is that it offers a descriptive statistical underpinning which discourse analysis does not provide, while it also allows researchers to probe underlying textual meanings, which content analysis does not offer. Indeed, frame analysis may be appropriately thought of as a cross pollination of the two methods, making it attractive to many researchers adopt a triangulation approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods (see Rydgren 2004 for one example). However, the method was not chosen for these reasons, given that the philosophical dimension of the research design was to engage with football fans so that their identifications could be understood. Hence, the only statistical methods used were the counting of frame incidence and the production of percentages from this. Thus, the only statistics used show how representative each of the frames are relative to other discourse within a given master frame. It is recognised that the type of frame analysis used in Chapter Four is slightly different to the methods in Chapters Three and Five. The latter chapters monitor how supporters identify with

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two definitions of *Europe* (UEFA competition and the EU). It is not particularly controversial to deem a person as identifying with either of these conceptions. Therefore a descriptive frame analysis approach was used. In this, dominant discourse which was immediately obvious (for instance, in Chapter Three, the idea that some fans enjoyed trans-European football travel) was grouped together and aggregated such comments into frames. In doing so, 'master' and 'sub-ordinate' frames were devised. This approach was adopted from Goffman's (1974) guidelines, by understanding a master frame to be the widest and imprecise frame which describes the loose attitude of the fan group. For instance, an example of a master frame included in Chapter Three was 'affirmative pro-European club competition' which covered all comments that gave very clear statements that highlight the perceived benefits of UEFA competition. This was useful because it showed how representative discourse which, for instance, favoured trans-European competition was in comparison to the broad frames which contained comments that were less favourable. Master frames, thus provide a picture of the dispersion of comments upon a particular issue. However, master frames were found to be too broad, in so far as they did not include the reasons why fans formed their favourable or unfavourable narratives about a definition of *Europe*. To access this data, each master frame was divided into its sub-ordinate frames.

By breaking the master frames down, the reasons *why* fans choose to/not to identify with a particular definition of *Europe* were uncovered. This revealed the dominant qualitative dimension of the analysis. Therefore, in the 'affirmative pro-European club competition' master frame, the composite discourses included European fan travel, prestige of the competition and the positive impact of Champions League

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revenue. This was useful to show how representative each of these frames are, using descriptive statistics, but the most interesting data emerged from the qualitative comments which were provided on the Internet messageboard. This form of analysis was started by first, breaking down the data into master frames and then, second, exploring the composition of the master frames with the sub-ordinate frames. This was a simple process of describing the trends in fan attitudes and this interpretation of the method was termed 'descriptive frame analysis'.

Initially, the intention was to replicate this method on xenophobia and cultural racism in English football data. However, this was found to be difficult because whereas supporters were happy to provide explicit narratives about UEFA or the EU, they were less likely to openly refer to themselves as xenophobic. As discussed in Chapter Four, to be labelled as xenophobic is an undesirable character trait. This does not happen in Chapters Three or Five because to identify with a definition of *Europe* probably does not probably carry the same level of stigma. Therefore, while the result of fan debate relating to the social acceptability of 'racist' issues (against non-white football players) was interesting, very few fans would provide openly xenophobic discourse. To counter this, the frame approach which Rydgren (2003; 2004) had earlier developed was adopted. This interpretation of frame analysis positions the method closer to discourse analysis than content analysis by looking at the underlying meanings in social communications. Rydgren (2003; 2004) also employed the method to show how ERP/RRP political figureheads described migration in Europe. Therefore, his frames were modified to look at the way football fans describe *foreign players* and the impact of the international football transfer market. Given the stigma social attached to being labelled 'racist' there may be some ethical question marks

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around the way Rydgren's frames were applied to football supporter's discourse, because many fan sentiments were classified as *xenophobic*. Therefore, from a deontological perspective – which seeks to protect the participants of a research project – if the subjects of the research are caused emotional distress, it may be viewed that a piece of research is unethical. Yet, if the ethical guideline which suggests that research participants cannot be offended by the findings of the research conducted upon them were entirely upheld, the scope for socially sensitive research would be greatly reduced. It is unlikely that this is a route that the *British Sociological Association* would like the discipline to move down, so the ethical protection must be in protecting the participants from being exposed to these allegations. This was done by making the featured discourse anonymous, which means that even if the supporters read this book – which is unlikely – they would probably not recognise a comment that they gave sometime in the past. To make sure that all comments were successfully analysed, discourse was interpreted during the summer of 2005 and returned to in November and December of that year to check that the process had been correct and fair. As I did this, a small number of minor amendments were made by reclassifying a small amount of discourse. This variation of the technique has been called 'framed discourse analysis'.

'Prior research driven' investigation

Despite the inspiration taken from Rydgren's methodology and King's substantive findings, this study was 'prior research driven', rather than wholly inductive or deductive. Indeed, Boyatzis (1998: 29) argues that frames can be developed in three different ways. First, they can be theory driven, which is a deductive approach in which a hypothesis will either be 'verified' or 'refuted'. Second, there is the 'prior

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research driven' approach which is semi-deductive because it uses previous research to form particular assumptions which impact upon the analysis but may not be rigidly stuck to, and, third, there are inductive positions which begin at the point of research and look for emergent themes which reoccur in the data. While the idea of the inductive approach, which involves analysing the data with an entirely open mind, is appealing, it is debatable whether this is possible unless the researcher is naïve to the research field or completely forgets the associated literature which they have previously read. In short, lived experience means that very few people are truly naïve to a social situation, which makes inductive positions difficult to put into operation.

Therefore, the second option was taken by using existing literature as the starting frame conjectures and modifying these in the light of the research findings. It was clear that this approach was more suitable than an inflexible deductive approach, which would not account for the theories which may have formed but may not prove to be true in this research. Further, if a totally inflexible approach was taken, it would be extremely likely that the individual differences within a collective identification, which frame analysis is particularly good at exposing, would be ignored (Fisher 1997: 2.36).

Epistemological questions

There are also clear epistemological questions which are raised concerning *how* culturally alike I had to be to the research participants to understand what they were communicating in their e-zine discourse. Geertz (1973: 5) argues that culture refers to the 'webs of significance' which humans have 'spun' in their social interactions. He argues that the way other individuals understand human action defines the culture.

Therefore, if the meanings embedded within the frames used by Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters were to be understood, knowledge of *their* culture would have to be gained.⁴⁰ It is uncertain whether a cultural understanding can be gathered by someone who is not part of the group (Budick 1996; Motzkin 1996; Iser 1996). If full group membership is required, comparative ethnographic research would be extremely difficult to undertake as social researchers could only understand their own social reality. There are two main ways in which this can be looked at. First, it could be argued that the in-group culture was defined by support for either Liverpool or Oldham Athletic supporters. This is particularly true because both fansites were themed according to the group supported. However, the group culture was arguably more specific than this as the Liverpool e-zine members repeatedly distinguished themselves as 'genuine' fans from the seemingly less authentic 'out of town' fans (which they referred to as OOT's) and 'wools' (which was a non-endearing term used to describe Liverpool fans who came from the more rural areas in the hinterlands of Merseyside). For instance, if I had tried to convince the Liverpool supporters that I was a Wigan-based fan, I may have been rejected as an 'OOT' or 'wool'. However, although the online supporters were not knowingly met, it was clear that Steve Kelly and his friends accepted me into their group of 'genuine' supporters because I am a Wigan-based Wigan Athletic fan, who attends live matches and they saw me as similar to them, in that I am not a 'consumer' fan.⁴¹ Therefore, if the group's

⁴⁰ To elaborate, Geertz (1973: 12) argues that physical actions such as a 'wink' do not merely mean the contraction of the eyelid, but something more culturally significant.

⁴¹ King (2002 [1998]) has divided supporters into 'traditional' and 'customer' fans; Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) break the customer fan distinctions further, differentiating between those fans who consume media football privately, in their own homes, or in public spaces, such as pubs and other communal area; Giulianotti (2002) composes a typology of football fans which is made up of supporters (most committed), fans, followers and flâneurs (least committed), whereas Redhead (1997) differentiates between traditional fans and 'post fans'.

suspicions were correct – and it was their culture which I was interpreting – I would be able to understand their ‘thick descriptions’ of events.

In the social science literature, Delanty (2005) and Jenkins (2002a) both argue there are three main positions which could be adopted. First, there are those who take a radical epistemological standpoint, which means that they favour an ontological position – a notion of understanding as ‘being’ - that to be a fully integrated part of the group is the only reliable form of perception. To apply this, my research would have to be conducted by Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans to understand Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporter cultures. The logic behind the argument is that the meanings and practices of being a football supporter are particular to a ‘knowing’ which only a fellow fan can understand. However, a shortcoming of this argument is that unless football club loyalties are equally split, comparative studies are impossible, as it is not feasible to be fully part of the two given clubs’ supporter cultures. The second, contrasting, position is held by many ‘postmodernists’ who claim that a radical position can make no claims to objectivity because researchers who take this stance only see the world from the point of view of the social group they are studying, when in actual fact, social reality is far more complex. Delanty (2005) argues that this position typically rejects all attempts to ground knowledge in a single standpoint as social actors within the social group play multiple social roles. Thus, human life is shaped by multiple and overlapping forms of experience, meaning that those embroiled in football culture are *not just* football fans, but also experience other forms of social activity. This line of argument is rooted in relativism and this means that social scientists cannot make any enduring claims about the wider social world, given that the nature of knowledge is entirely contested.

Finally, there are those who adopt a reflexive standpoint. Such researchers call for a weaker standpoint than the radicals but stronger than the postmodernists and recognise that he/she may play an active role in the research process. In this context, a reflexive standpoint recognises the separation of football fans as the subject and football fan cultures as an approach. Those who fall in this tradition lay claims to studying an objective reality which might be transferable to other areas of social life but are cautious about generalising their results too much. Delanty (2005) argues that followers of this approach adhere to the basic notion that a reflexive methodology is one in which the researcher questions his/her role in the research process and extends this to the epistemological level. This means that the gathered knowledge can be both objective and critical.

There are arguments for all three epistemological positions, but the reflexive tradition was followed, because I do not believe you have to 'be one to know one' as radicals would argue, or that all claims about the social world are problematic, as those who take the postmodern might suggest. By assuming this position, the work of Geertz (1973; 2000) is again influential, as he intended a meaning of culture not to be completely exclusionary but loosely shared. Hence, whilst Geertz recognised that individual experiences shape individual understanding, he maintained that culture was a very public 'thick description'. As a football supporter of another Lancashire team, I could understand the sentiment behind almost all of the gathered data, with a few exceptions, which were particular to Liverpool or Oldham Athletic e-zine supporters. In cases where the discourse could not be understood, the key interpreters - the editors

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of *TTW&R* and *BTB* – were asked to explain the meanings. From this, the frames of reference used in all e-zine discourse could be analysed.

Looking for identification indicators

Yet, having developed the frames, it is necessary to highlight what was looked for in the qualitative discourse, so that the 'stories' of identity/identification construction amongst the supporter groups could be interpreted. To do this, Figure 2.01 was constructed to diagrammatically illustrate how collective identities are formed through *narratives about us*, *narratives about them*, *autotypification* and *heterotypification*.

The latter two terms have been borrowed from research by Crolley and Hand (2002; 2007) which focuses upon national identities which are conferred through the sports' pages of newspapers across Europe. The meanings of these terms will now be discussed.

First, narratives were understood as the way a story is told through human discourse. Therefore, narratives are a vital means of communication because by telling and listening to stories, listeners learn about the story-teller (as the story-teller learns about the listeners) and reaffirm individual and collective goals and values. Bruner (1994) argues that when asked to describe themselves or others, most people will tell a story which they believe to be revelatory. This is what Sarbin (1986) refers to as the 'narratory principle' as he believes that the process of socialisation involves telling and listening to stories. Although narratives are not the only way that humans confer significance to events, they are a key way of defining identifications. It is through the way that stories are told that individuals and social groups attempt to make sense of their existence. Further Ricoeur (1984) argues that daily activities take on meaning

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when they are recounted through narratives, because it is only then that it is possible to locate actions within a structured plot. Like identities, narratives should be thought of as a social process because as stories are retold (by different people or in different contexts) certain issues in the narrative may be exaggerated or forgotten. To look to the examples of a football-based collective identification, Crolley and Hand (2002) contend that newspaper journalists tend to recount a range of national memories, by using narratives that include wars and other nationalistic events to report international football matches. This heightens the feeling of nationalism. Abell *et al.* (2000) takes this further by suggesting that in the wake of Princess Diana's death (1997) news footage recreated her image as the ultimate figurehead who symbolised the most positive elements of British society. They argue that the public memory of Diana was recreated in an entirely selective way through the narrative of the interview she gave to *Panorama* journalist, Martin Bashir (1995). They found this particularly interesting as news editors only selected elements of the documentary which showed Diana's positive attributes. This narrative device highlights the power that the retelling of stories can have in developing a collective mindset. However, all members of the collective are not equal when it comes to defining which narratives are told. For instance, Edensor (2004) points out that an automobile tells a particular story about the nation in which it was designed as it becomes a symbolic representation of a society. So, Edensor (2004) argues, the Rolls Royce symbolises the elegance of high class British society, whereas the Mini shows the small scale flamboyancy of the 1970s British working classes. Meanwhile, German cars, such as Volkswagens are sold on the pretence of reliability and efficiency. While it is possible that not all members of a group would interpret the 'meaning' of models of cars in the same way, an enduring 'thick description' emerges through shared cultural understanding.

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However, some members of the society – such as advertisers and car designers - are more responsible for encoding this meaning than others. Therefore an image of a collective identification can be constructed through the narratives of the culturally powerful. Jones (2003), looking at the way that architects design buildings to ‘rebrand’ national identities, found that narratives created identifications in exactly the same way. Therefore, by listening to the stories that members tell about the group, a description of the collective identification can be gathered.

Second, there are two types of stories which can be told, those that are *about us* and those that are *about 'others'*. Elias and Scotson (1965 [1994]) argue that the stories *we* tell about *ourselves* exaggerate positive events when compared to the way we report events which involve *'others'*. Therefore, narratives are relational. For instance, Bond (2006) and McIntosh *et al.* (2004; 2004a) both highlight how Scottish narratives often denigrate ‘Englishness’, whereas Adamson (2006) shows how French national identities are strengthened in their ‘otherness’ to French immigrant cultures and Schneider (2001) argues that German culture is renewed through the national exclusion of Turkish immigrants. Therefore stories told about ‘others’ help researchers understand who are defined amongst the in-group. Stories concerning the ‘we’ group and how they responded to the ‘they’ group were sought in the data. This was important because the ways in which the in-group actively differentiated themselves from the out-group potentially facilitated internal new cultural attitudes (see Melucci 1995; 1996). This is demonstrated in Chapter Three, as Liverpool fans developed strong local and weaker European identifications as a response to their ‘othering’ English culture.

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Third, collective identities/identifications are formed through discursive descriptions of identity. These are also relational in that they can refer to individual or group self descriptions (known as *autotypification*) or descriptions of 'others' (*heterotypification*). Discursive definitions of identification involve self-proclamations of identification (I am/we are European, I am/we are English, I am a man/we are men, I am a/we are women etc.) or the attachment of a label to others and both processes indicate a relationship between an individual or social group and an overarching culture. While Jenkins (1996) refers to this dimension of identification as 'commonsense' this does not mean that it is not worth exploring and so this type of identification indicator was looked for in the results.

NVIVO

Analysis was carried out using *NVIVO v2.0*. A major advantage of using this programme was that it was fully compatible with the electronic storage of e-zine data which had been collected. Initially, it was hoped that *NVIVO* would automatically carry out a large part of the analysis, in the way that *SPSS* carries out calculations in quantitative research, although this proved not to be the case as it simply provided a computerised space to gather framed discourse. It was also wrongly expected that *NVIVO* analysis would prove to be quicker than pen-and-paper frame analysis, when it actually took a similar length of time. Yet, my research greatly benefited from the programme because it allowed easy access to the well-ordered data I had analysed. This data would not have been so easily accessed had traditional 'printed' storage methods been used, as frantically searching through boxes of data is more onerous than the click of a mouse button.

CONCLUSION

This chapter covers the practical, theoretical and philosophical issues which emerged in the design, data collection and analysis phases of the research. Time was taken to decide how e-zines would be best utilised as a data source, and they were initially shied away from. However, *RAOTL and JKL* proved to be a rich seam of untapped potential and the discourse which emerged can be considered to be a form of 'virtual ethnography'. In 1991, Duke argued that sociologists of sport must make better use of fanzines throughout the 1990s. I would argue that in the current period, sociologists of sport should continue to utilise fanzine material but, wherever possible, should also look to e-zine messageboard comments as a key data source. This type of discourse suited the variants of frame analysis and was easily uploaded onto *NVIVO*.

This chapter concludes the first part of this book, which tackles the existing literature and covers the 'research operation' issues. In the following chapters, the results and discussion of the data analysis show the nature of European identifications to be highly contested.

Chapter Three

FOOTBALL AND EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATIONS: THE IMPACT OF POPULAR CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Football potentially provides one definition of 'Europe' which people can identify with. This chapter explores this notion by analysing the way Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters talk about a 'Europe' principally defined by UEFA club competition. The results show Liverpool supporters speaking positively about 'Europe'. This forms a key part of the book's results, in so far as this discourse denotes the existence of a 'loose' European identification. It is important to note that pro-European discourse is not aired by Oldham Athletic fans, who demonstrate strong national identifications. Both groups of fans display local identifications, although Liverpool supporters' attachments to their city are more obvious, because they see their culture as *threatened* by a perception of Englishness. In the first section, the role of football is highlighted as pivotal because it provides one legitimate definition of *Europe* which fans can identify with. The second section explores the existence of national identifications amongst the two supporter groups and demonstrates that the influence of football is also important given that the English national team provides one clear way in which nationhood can be venerated. Hence, the type of European identification which is explored in this chapter finds its definition of Europe in popular culture. A descriptive frame analysis approach has been selected to show variations in the way Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans display territorial identifications. This chapter begins by considering fan recognitions and perceptions

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of a football-defined *idea* of Europe before looking at the prevalence of national identifications amongst the supporter groups.

GETTING 'INTO' EUROPE: DEFINING FOOTBALL'S 'EUROPE'

Before looking at fans' possible identifications with Europe, it is first necessary to consider what this ill-defined notion refers to in football terms. In Chapter One, Connelly's (2000) argument that Europe could be defined as UEFA's member associations was discussed. From the sample fan discourse it seemed that although this message resonated on some level with fans, it became manifest in two slightly different definitions.

The first definition loosely saw Europe as a range of UEFA competitions, which were principally aligned with Europe's premier club competition, the Champions League. This definition was frequently found amongst Liverpool fans, but was also utilised on a smaller number of occasions by Oldham Athletic supporters. Examples of this are found below:

I imagine a new ground could handle it two or three times a season
(assuming we have a decent run in Europe) which is all we manage now
anyway.

Liverpool fan (15) (6th May 2005).

Could you really care whether Utd, Arsenal, Chelsea etc are in Europe?

Oldham Athletic fan (6) (5th April 2005).

The common theme in this discourse is that Europe is something to be 'in' or qualify for. Liverpool supporters are far more likely to be 'in' Europe regularly, having watched their club annually qualify for elite UEFA club competitions in recent years,

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whereas in their ordinary spectator experiences, Oldham Athletic fans are less likely to be 'in' Europe, having never seen their club qualify for such competitions.

Therefore, the first definition of football fans' 'Europe' is something which elite clubs achieve (and other clubs' fans may watch on television but not really 'care' for as hinted in Oldham Athletic fan (6)'s discourse) rather than something which supporters across the UK automatically find themselves in.

The second definition was only found amongst Liverpool supporters and referred to a transnational 'gaze' across a number of elite European leagues which measured a football player's quality. An example of this is provided by fan (8):

Kirkland has got a quality career ahead of him and with our support he could be one of the top keepers in Europe.

Liverpool fan (8) (13th December 2004).

The context of this discourse is the claim that (then) Liverpool goalkeeper Chris Kirkland can fulfil his potential and become one of 'the top keepers in Europe'. In this case, 'Europe' was seen as a high quality competition for players to prove their talents. This means that being amongst the European elite signifies an even higher quality of play than being one of the best across the UK. It is assumed from this type of discourse that Liverpool fans would like the club to retain its high quality players (presumably those who are amongst the best across Europe or even the world) which therefore hints at a slightly different definition of Europe than was previously discussed. In this discourse, it is suggested that fans see their club, or at least their players' competitors, in Europe (even though 'in' is still preferred to 'across').

Oldham Athletic supporters do not ordinarily see their players as being amongst the

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best in anything but the English division in which they reside, so do not use 'Europe' in this way.

Fan ambitions and aims for 'club success': The impact of 'Europe'

Data in Table 3.01⁴² presents initial hints at distinctions relating to football-defined identifications by showing the differences of aspirations in final (national) league placing. Overwhelmingly, Liverpool fans targeted fourth place in the Premiership (77 per cent). The significance of this placing is that it allows English clubs entry into the final (third) Champions League qualifying round. By contrast, just 13 per cent of Liverpool fans saw the national league title as their primary league aim. This was surprising given that Liverpool is historically the most successful English football club given that they have won eighteen league titles.⁴³ However, this evidence could be interpreted in two ways: first, as a pragmatic approach which is that fans recognise that the 'knock out' later stages of Champions League allow a reasonable but not world-class Liverpool team a better chance to gain well-recognised success than winning the Premier League, or second, and potentially growing from this, that the quest to be 'the best' in England has, for many in the sample, been eclipsed by the desire to 'be in' Europe. The latter argument is backed up by Tomkins (2005: 6) who argues that '5th place [has become]... the new 2nd, 4th the new 1st' for clubs like Liverpool. Thus, the fact that entry into Champions League competition has become the most important prize can be taken as a formative hint that elite professional football is in the process of 'Europeanising', through the lens of principal identifications with their club's chances of trophy acquirement (which have turned to 'Europe'). Alternatively, Oldham Athletic fans harbour far less lofty aspirations by

⁴² All data is found in the thesis appendix.

⁴³ To contextualise this achievement, until April 2007, the second most successful team were Manchester United, with 15 top flight league titles, followed by Arsenal with 13 and Everton with 9.

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arguing that 'avoiding relegation' from their current league should be the club's principal aim (49.47 per cent). This data suggests that Liverpool supporters are expressing identifications (interpreted through hopes for club success) which are geared toward trans-European football whilst Oldham Athletic supporters' aspirations are more humble and concerned with maintaining their club's current position. Yet, it is dangerous to draw too many significant findings from Table 3.01 because the formative clues are without the bases of identification which are highlighted in Figure 2.01. I will continue to explore the supporter identifications by drawing upon these themes.

Data presented in Table 3.02 shows that an overwhelming majority (91.86 per cent) of Liverpool fans' narratives relating to European club competition were positive. This highlighted that they were forming an association in this *perception* of Europe (i.e. trans-European football competition). By the same token, 88.89 per cent of Oldham Athletic fans' European club competition-themed stories were also favourable. However, because Liverpool supporters accounted for 97.26 per cent of all comments relating to European club competitions it is evident that such competitions are more of a reality in the supporter experience of *super clubs* fans.

Table 3.02 demonstrates how European competition is regarded by Liverpool and Oldham Athletic sample fans and gives an indication as to how pressing this issue is to the respective supporter community identifications. However, it is more interesting to question how supporter recognitions are 'framed' as this helps to analyse *why* positive identifications may have formed. Table 3.03 does this by drawing upon four crucial master frames. The first master frame refers to affirmative pro-European club

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competition comments. This discourse covers the very clear statements which highlight the perceived benefits of such competitions. Second is the affirmative anti-European club competition frame that communicates clear reasons why such competitions are undesirable. The remedial pro-European club competition frame which largely counters affirmative anti-integration discourse, by providing a defence of UEFA club competition, is third. The final frame refers to a remedial anti-European discourse that is reactive to the affirmative pro-European club competition frame by offering reasons why positive statements should be questioned. The table shows that affirmative pro-European club competition was the most heavily drawn upon master frame accounting for 91.88 per cent of Liverpool and 88.88 per cent of Oldham Athletic comments. This was far more frequently utilised by Liverpool fans, who accounted for 97.35 per cent of all discourse within this frame. Indeed, Oldham Athletic supporters only provided comments in this and the remedial anti-European club competition frames. The remedial anti-European club competition frame also proved to be the second most heavily utilised master discourse amongst Liverpool fans, yet this accounted for just 6.88 per cent of European club competition fan comments. On the basis of these results it is fair to point out that both fans are embracing the football idea of *Europe* more than they are rejecting it, although the experiences which arise from this are more likely to be felt by Liverpool supporters than their Oldham Athletic counterparts. The next part of the chapter will continue to probe this idea by looking at the secondary frames which are located within the three utilised master frames.

AFFIRMATIVE PRO-EUROPEAN CLUB COMPETITION FRAME

The affirmative pro-European club competition master frame was composed of four secondary frames (see Table 3.04). The most popular of these amongst Liverpool fans was that 'European away travel provides the finest fan experience', whereas Oldham Athletic supporters most commonly welcomed the competition with the argument that the 'winner of the Champions League is the best team in Europe'. This section will further explore the use of the secondary frames. The first one to be considered is that European away travel provides the finest fan experiences.

European away travel provides the finest fan experiences

This frame is consistent with the findings of Brown (1993), King (2000; 2003), Redhead (1986; 1991) and Sugden (2002a) who all discovered that European away experiences were agreeable with fans. Using Manchester United as a case study club, King explicitly focussed upon fans that travel to European 'away' games. The group were predominantly male, key consumers/ producers of the Manchester United fanzines *United We Stand* and *Red Issue* and were central in the creation of the Independent Manchester United Supporters Club. This frame resonates with King's findings because he argued that his case study crowd clearly relished the 'craic' (ibid: 424) and the 'buzz' (Chilton *et al.* 1997: 3-4) provided by each European foray. Indeed key respondents in King's research reported that:

The more you go and experience the taste, and absorb different culture,
the more you do become a European, a Europhile.

Mike Adams (in King 2000: 426)

Among (Manchester United) fans you will find few Eurosceptics

United We Stand (1996: 8 in King ibid: 426)

The comments are typical of this frame because they show how positive football-based identifications of Europe are formed through fan travel. This was the most significant way that Liverpool supporters used pro-European competition frames, accounting for 57.82 per cent of the affirmative pro-European competition master frame. Oldham Athletic supporters, who have never experienced their club qualify for UEFA competition, did not draw upon this frame. Liverpool fans (1) and (2) illustrated two examples of this discourse:

We are definitely making the trip, now we've all got the bug for Euro
aways. I love European travel!

Liverpool fan (1) (21st December 2004)

To be honest it doesn't bother me going into UEFA cup. A lot of seasoned
euro awayers prefer the trips to Europe's weird and wonderful places
rather than the big grounds in Europe we've mostly already done.

Liverpool fan (2) (30th May 2005)

Fan (2)'s comment is interesting given that he is excited by the possibility of Liverpool entering UEFA's second most prestigious tournament, the UEFA Cup. The reason why he is thrilled by this prospect is that it offers alternative views to visit 'Europe's weird and wonderful' places, which he is yet to experience. This discourse takes on additional relevance given that the general argument in this chapter is that the Champions League is Europeanising fans' outlook. However, in this instance, it is the less prestigious trans-European competition, the UEFA Cup which is significant. This marks the importance of fan hedonism rather than improving the long and middle-term economic future of the club as a key source of pro-European supporter frames. However, while it is clear that fan (2) sees European travel as highly enjoyable, he does hint that travelling to the same large non-English grounds is less exciting as it becomes

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increasingly commonplace. Once again, given that the Champions League often pits the same European superclubs against each other, it seems that the fan experience associated to investigating new European cities is more enjoyable than regularly visiting the large European cities which superclubs are located within. In this case, the Champions League may not be Europeanising fan tastes in the way that the variety of UEFA Cup experiences may. Second, fan (1) argues that he 'has the bug for Euro-aways'. This suggests that supporter excitement for European experience is infectious and that he has become part of this hedonistic fan movement. Fan (1) leaves us absolutely certain that he is relishing his Champions League experience by declaring 'I love European travel!'

Therefore, the common articulation is that European fan travel provides pleasurable experiences for supporters. As only a minority of football fans have the opportunity to travel across non-British regions of Europe in order to watch their team, this movement could be considered as '(neo)-tribal'. This idea is central in both the work of Maffesoli (1996) and Schlesinger (1992) who argue that tribal activities are those which are not conducted by the masses. Therefore, such fan activities might constitute a form of tribalism as European experiences are different from those of the rest of the population who follow non-European qualifying clubs, such as Oldham Athletic. Thus, the experience of trans-European fan travel is monopolised by supporters of elite clubs with the 'tribe' consuming new experiences which the 'masses' do not.

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Winner of the Champions League is the best team in Europe

Fans of UEFA competition qualifying clubs generate narratives based around a football-centred *idea* of Europe. Fan travel is clearly significant in the production of favourable European stories. This section considers the next frame which suggests that a second favourable narrative is created through the idea that the winner of the Champions League is best club side in Europe. This frame is utilised by fans of both clubs: all Oldham Athletic and 25.51 per cent of Liverpool supporter articulations that fell within the affirmative pro-European club competition master frame did so through this discourse. After Liverpool's 2004/5 Champions League final victory over AC Milan, this frame was heavily used. This argument is documented in the following Liverpool supporter statements:

If we win it in Istanbul & finish 5th place.....who gives a flying fuck!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Let us go into the UEFA Cup, and lets all hail "CHAMPIONS" in every round that we go into. Then let the media & UEFA stew in their shite...we don't need them as much as they need us. I can imagine in every ground around England in 2005/2006, we shall be chanting "Champions of Europe" to the likes of Man. Utd, the Arse [Arsenal] & of course Chelsea.

Liverpool fan (37) (6th May 2005).

Every league match next season, just before the teams emerge from the tunnel, there has to be a huge loud rendition of 'Bring on the Champions, the Champions of Europe!!!!

Liverpool fan (7) (6th May 2005).

Liverpool supporters find group comfort in their claims that their team is the best in Europe because it won the Champions League. Social psychologists such as Reicher and Hopkins (2001) and rational choice theorists such as Coleman (1990) tell us that self-praise is an enjoyable and rational experience. In this case Liverpool fans are using this frame to worship their team, which gives them a positive sense of well

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being. Therefore, a *perception of Europe* is seized and legitimated because the criterion of deciding who the best team in Europe is provides a directly favourable result. The idea of superiority induced by competition victory would almost certainly be transferable to the national setting, so if Liverpool had won the English Premiership fans would have declared it the best team in England. This frame of narratives is also based upon fan emotion rather than club interests: although winning the Champions League is undeniably good for the club's financial interests, the message which is given in the fan discourse is that such a scenario is desirable so that supporters can boast to fans of other English clubs that their team has won Europe's premier tournament. Therefore, European victory becomes a source of indulgence. In a similar way, Oldham Athletic fans used the same rationale – although tinged with some irony - to venerate their team. Evidence of this is given by Oldham Athletic fan (1):

Well thats settled then, we are champions of Europe cos we beat Man City and they beat Liverpool.

Oldham Athletic fan (1) (26th May 2005)

Like Liverpool fans, Oldham Athletic fan (1) is communicating that he understands that the Champions League is the pinnacle of European club football achievement but with humour argues that Oldham Athletic are the best team in Europe because they beat Manchester City in the FA Cup, who had previously beaten Liverpool in a Premiership fixture. The next frame is also located within the affirmative pro-European club competition master discourse by considering that European club competition is the most exciting club competition.

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European club competition provides the greatest cup excitement

This frame draws upon the idea that the superior playing quality of European club games means that such matches are the most thrilling. Comments included in this discourse argue that home and away European matches generate the best match atmospheres. This frame also includes discourse which relates to the general excitement of the 'cup' experience, such as anticipation over 'next round' draws. In common with the 'European away travel provides the finest fan experience' frame, this was only utilised by Liverpool supporters and accounted for 6.8 per cent of their affirmative pro-European comments. Liverpool fan (3) provides an example of this frame:

I had a dream the other night - at the Final but full of surreal goings on (as dreams tend to). It went to penalties at which point it all shifted indoors, with the goal being some kind of alcove. Kluivert had somehow returned to Milan and scored the first. For our first, up stepped Djimi - at which point, for the first time in my entire life, I realised I was dreaming. I woke up before he could take it. No word of a lie.

The European Cup excitement is really killing me!!

Liverpool fan (3) (16th May 2005)

Liverpool fan (3) is recounting an exciting dream in which the 2004/5 Champions League final is to be decided by penalty shoot-out. This scenario is used to decide cup matches, if the two competing teams have scored the same number of goals after the regular match duration (90 minutes) plus 'extra-time' (30 minutes). In this dream, the former AC Milan striker, Patrick Kluivert has returned to the club and scored the first penalty. Liverpool is due to take its first in which French defender, Djimi Traore, a player berated by fans and the press for a perceived lack of playing ability, has been nominated. At which point, the intense excitement of the dream proves to be too much for Liverpool fan (3) and he wakes himself up. Although frames rather than

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individual comments take precedence in this analysis, as a sub-point the final comment made by fan (3) is interesting given that he argues that the 'excitement is really killing me'. Ordinarily, the thought of death would undoubtedly be unpleasant, however in this context it is used in a playful fashion, almost within a micro-frame of death by indulgence. Hence, the way that the discourse is used in the context of the frame inverts its meaning, to a pleasurable apprehension. Overall, the frame highlights that the exhilarating experiences of European competition are positively impacting upon the collective mindsets of supporters of clubs like Liverpool - even to the point of breaking into fans' sub-conscious dreams. The next frame moves on to look at the potential impacts of the Champions League as revenue source upon fans' identifications.

Champions League generates revenue that is necessary for the successful running of the club

During the case study period, Liverpool's entry into the Champions League was far from assured. At the end of the 2003/4 season - the point at which data collection began - Liverpool narrowly gained a fourth place Premiership finish. This meant it gained entry to the Champions League qualifying round (after they had failed to qualify for the 2003/4 competition). A year later, Liverpool was granted entry into the first qualifying round of 2005/6 tournament as competition winners, even though its league position did not merit entry. Under conditions of uncertain qualification the importance of European club competition becomes most apparent because many big clubs frame Champions League qualification as the 'minimum acceptable level of on pitch success' (Parkes 2005: 22). This is highlighted in the way the Liverpool boardroom spoke about European competition. However, Champions League

qualification may not be explicitly framed as either the pinnacle of football achievement or as a narrative of shared memories from Liverpool's proud European Cup past, but as an economic enterprise. This was highlighted at the club's 'Annual General Meeting' (AGM) in November 2004 by Chief Executive Rick Parry, when he reported a £21.9m annual loss:

The key business objective for the year [2003/4] was to secure an immediate return to the Champions League... The board, therefore, took a conscious decision to continue to invest in the team in the summer of 2003 and to budget for a loss. Instead, the main financial target was to ensure there was no increase in net debt. Both these objectives were achieved. The loss is essentially attributable to two factors ... [firstly] the loss of Champions League revenue and [secondly] the decision to change the management team. The loss in itself does not constrain player spending, after all we did invest significantly in the summer.

Rick Parry (*The Liverpool Echo*, 5th November 2004)

This was not an isolated comment and certainly did not cause widespread surprise when it was announced as members of the playing and coaching staff had repeatedly articulated similar sentiments. Thus, this statement accurately highlights that elite clubs, such as Liverpool, are constantly pushing forward the message that they 'belong' in the (highly lucrative) European club competitions.⁴⁴ Confirming this, Sandvoss (2003: 120) argues that football fans' aims are becoming increasingly 'rational' and Martin (2005: 358) makes a case that this is enough to claim that (particularly young) supporters are developing strong European identifications. As an unproven statement, Martin's argument is particularly contentious as the messages which espouse from the club belong to boardroom voices rather than those from the supporter community. Yet, results within this secondary frame show how fan discourse resonates with the institutional message: 9.86 per cent of all affirmative

⁴⁴ It is doubtful that this is the same as the 'belonging' which Jones and Krzyżanowski (2007) identify as a form of identity. Indeed it is used as a way of mobilising fan identities in the club's pursuit of Champions League revenues.

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pro-European competition discourse was generated through this frame. This was not shared by Oldham Athletic fans, who did not appear to see their club as directly dependent upon Champions League revenue. Liverpool fans (4) and (5) give examples of how this frame was typically utilised:

The poor signings have wasted capital, wages and mean that Rafa has to find quality players across the team at cheap prices a difficult ask especially set against the boards lack of action on investment which means the CL is even more important.

Liverpool fan (4) (22nd January 2005)

Whatever the FA likes to think, both domestic trophies have been devalued since the financial rewards for European progress became so great. Given the choice, I'd happily swap (for this season, at least) the chance of winning these two cups in order to gain greater progress in the two main competitions.

Liverpool fan (5) (11th November 2004)

Liverpool fan (4) is communicating that previous 'poor signings' have meant that current manager, Rafael Benitez, has to find the best possible players on a small player recruitment budget. However, he adds the clause that if Liverpool was to enjoy success in the Champions League this budget would increase and that the chances of the recruiting higher quality of players would therefore be greater.

Liverpool fan (5) similarly highlights the financial importance of the Champions League ('European progress') in the successful upkeep of Liverpool football club. Interestingly, he also points out that he would be prepared to swap success in the national FA and League cups for greater progress in the 'two main competitions' (Premiership and Champions League). This is particularly interesting for two reasons. First, the discourse suggests that the Champions League has displaced national competitions, such as the FA and League Cups, into peripheral positions in the eyes of European super club supporters, while second, this frame provides a

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departure from the previous frames which have stressed fan experience/hedonism into a second type of frame which is related to Champions League participation helping to boost the clubs finances. This data supports Roche's argument (2001: 91) that the Europeanisation of elite club football has presented 'a major challenge to the standing of national leagues' by arguing that the importance of national competitions has diminished.

AFFIRMATIVE ANTI-EUROPEAN CLUB COMPETITION FRAME

The next European club competition master frame is the affirmative anti-European discourse. This was a minority master frame, accounting for just 1.25 per cent of Liverpool fans comments. Within this figure, all four comments referred to an unease that the Champions League was 'edging toward a European super league'.

Edging toward a European super league

This frame caused concern amongst Liverpool fans who were worried that the Champions League was becoming more like a European super league. The focus of this trepidation was not, explicitly, a rejection of *Europe* but that the pervasive powers of super clubs would mean that they would assure their own entry to a European super league. The reality of this threat is unknown, but if it was justified, Liverpool, as a G14 member, would almost certainly be guaranteed entry to the new format.

However, concern amongst fans was three-fold. First, it was confirmed that a super league would remove any contemporary claims to meritocracy within trans-European competition, in that there were doubts that a new league would be based upon a promotion/relegation system. Second, there was concern that the financial value of the competition would almost certainly be membership in, rather than winning the

league. This may see some super clubs' playing standards further decline. The third point was that playing non-English super clubs frequently would remove the *special* appeal of trans-European competition, given that occasional trips to continental cities provide a rare treat away from the often *humdrum* league excursions. Demonstrating two of these concerns is Liverpool fan (6):

If a European Super League IS ever introduced, then I really think it will destroy the game as we know it, and the reasons are so obvious I can't believe anyone would ever contemplate the introduction of it.

The reason games against Real Madrid, Barca and Milan are so special is because they are rare events (though becoming less rare already for the teams that qualify consistently for the CL in it's current format). If you are playing these same teams at least twice a season, every season, then instead of it being a special occasion, it becomes the norm, and the norm is boring. They would be especially boring due to the meetings taking place in a league format, as at least some excitement is retained when the big teams are meeting regularly in knockout football. Crowds would drop, you've only got to see some of the attendances in football mad Italy already for many CL games for proof of this. I'm pretty sure we'd be invited to take part in it if it does come about, despite our current average status, and I'm in no doubt Parry would accept such an invitation, proven by the fact he was one of the voices of protest when they got rid of the second group stage of the CL in favour of an earlier knockout stage.

The long term outcome would be that this competition would become a TV sport, like fucking snooker or some other such shite, played out before half empty stadiums and with about as much in common with the working class man on the streets of Liverpool as the Henley Regatta.

It's a frightening scenario and one that I hope never comes about, because a European Super League would be the most short sighted thing ever, and if anything does succeed in killing the game, it will be the greed of the so called big clubs themselves, including our beloved Liverpool FC.

Liverpool fan (6) (25th January 2005)

This example explicitly highlights two issues within this secondary frame, namely that the current rarity of European adventures makes them *special* but that an added frequency might remove some of this appeal, and, second, that the league would be laden with financial, rather than sporting, motivations. Both arguments were seen as legitimate reasons to reject this manifestation of *Europe*. However, it is noticeable

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that this type of rejection falls solely upon the idea of UEFA competition as revenue sources (which are negatively viewed as sources of supporter disenchantment) rather than the enchanting experiences associated to the consumption of trans-European fan experiences. There was a general nostalgic assumption that this was out of line with the original conceptions of trans-European club competition. However, this is not true as King (2003) has argued that changes toward a league format are not radically different to the tournament's past. For instance, in the 1950s Gabriel Hanot, the protagonist of trans-European club football, put forward the idea of the European Cup as a European super league. Yet, national federations' objections prevented this from developing. Notwithstanding, in both March 1967 and November 1977, the 'top clubs of Europe' also discussed proposals for a European super league (King 2003: 137). The appeal of an elite trans-European league has always been fuelled by the desire of big clubs to reduce the possibility of early round elimination in cup competitions. Nevertheless, it is perception (rather than reality) that is monitored in this research and for this reason; some fans were clearly opposed to dimensions of trans-European club competition.

REMEDIAL ANTI-EUROPEAN CLUB COMPETITION FRAME

The final utilised master frame is made up of discourse which disputes the idea that European club competition is a positive movement by questioning the assumptions in the affirmative pro-European club competition master frame. When the issue of European club football was raised, this master frame was the second most popularly drawn upon by both Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans. However, this master frame only counted for 6.88 per cent of Liverpool and 11.11 per cent of Oldham Athletic supporter comments on the topic. Inside this frame, Liverpool fans

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questioned the authority of European club football by arguing that it made clubs put 'too much stress on potential revenues' and (in common with the only Oldham Athletic fan comment in the frame) that 'European club football allowed illegitimate claims to superiority'. The former secondary frame will be examined first.

Too much emphasis placed upon revenue

This frame counters the discourse which argues that the 'Champions League generates revenue that is necessary for the successful running of the club' by arguing that the sporting values of football have subsided to capitalist principles. Whilst no comments in the frame denied the importance of Champions League revenue, the case was made that this did not benefit the club or the rest of English football. This is discussed, with reference to 'G14' - a lobby group of European super clubs who have clustered together in order to challenge their national associations and the international football bodies of FIFA and UEFA - in Chapter Six. Yet, it is worth pointing out that G14 (as well as their predecessors, the Media Partners) have challenged UEFA for changes to the revenue structure of European competition to further favour the leading clubs. This has not always been well received by fans who are opposed to football becoming an increasingly commercial enterprise. This was the case in ten Liverpool fan comments, which accounted for 45.45 per cent of all discourse within the remedial anti-European club competition master frame.

Liverpool fan (7) provides a typical example of this:

The combination of the EU/EEC and free-market dictates that the only regulation is agreed national competition fiscal rules, agreed that is by the clubs involved. At the moment the big G14 clubs dictate to all other clubs about the redistribution of money, through prize money and television revenue, hence the rich get richer etc. and the mugs (Leeds, Newcastle) get caught out trying to play catch-up.

What I hope happens is that the chairmen of all the 'nearly' clubs, the small city clubs, ex-champions clubs, wake up and discover that this is not the best way to proceed.

Imagine, for example, the concept of awarding **NO PRIZE MONEY WHATSOEVER** for a champions league finish (the reward of the next seasons revenue should suffice). That may help even things up.

Liverpool fan (7) (25th January 2005)

Liverpool fan (7) is communicating that he believes that Champions League revenues are making the best clubs stronger, whilst a second tier of clubs - such as Leeds United and Newcastle United - splash out large sums of money trying to secure Champions League places. He also refers to the financial trouble which some clubs may experience if they spend beyond their realistic budgets in order to acquire the playing quality which would ensure perennial Champions League qualification. The story of Leeds United, which is alluded to, is significant because it provided the highest profile example of a club that overspent in order to achieve Champions League revenues. To explain, Leeds United qualified for the Champions League in 2000/1 (eventually reaching the semi-finals of the competition) but the-then Chairman, Peter Risdale subsequently budgeted on the false assumption that qualification would be gained in future seasons. However, in the following season Leeds United only qualified for the less lucrative UEFA Cup. The drop in revenues meant that they could not sustain their massive outgoings (principally player wages, but also a 'mortgage-style' debt which they had accrued in order to purchase higher quality players) and had to rapidly sell off their best players for lower fees than would have been their normal market value. This left a group of lower quality players - some of whom were on high wages – which no other clubs wanted. As a result,

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Leeds United was relegated from the Premier League in 2003/4.⁴⁵ On the other hand, Chelsea provides a different case. Over a longer period of time it had also gradually spent beyond its guaranteed means and needed Champions League revenue in order to sustain large outgoings. Yet, unlike Leeds United, Chelsea qualified for the Champions League by beating Liverpool on the last day of the 2002/3 season to claim a place in the Champions League qualifying round. This retained Chelsea's position as a 'top club' and they have subsequently won the Premiership in 2004/5 and 2005/6 seasons. Statements within this frame show a fan awareness of many clubs' financial dependence upon the Champions League and are therefore careful not to overly embrace the competition because of fears that - as was the case with Leeds United - this would not be beneficial to the long-term future of the club. The next frame questions the legitimacy of the Champions League by arguing that it holds illegitimate claims to superiority in football.

Illegitimate claims to superiority

The frame directly addresses discourse which argues that the 'winner of the Champions League is the best team in Europe'. This accounts for 54.55 per cent of Liverpool supporters' remedial anti-European competition frames. This data shares a common theme with the 13 per cent of comments in Table 3.01 by arguing that Liverpool should be aiming to win the Premiership title rather than qualifying for the Champions League via a fourth place finish. Oldham Athletic fan (2) provides the sole Oldham Athletic supporter group comment within this master frame. Liverpool fans' reason for this compliant is a resentment towards football's contemporary conditions, which the Champions League is perceived to epitomise. Pre-Champions

⁴⁵ The club had mortgaged itself against Champions League income in order to pay out high transfer fees and wages to their players (see for instance Roston 2004).

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League (1992/3), Liverpool was the most successful English team in Europe, winning four European Cups (the forerunner to the Champions League).⁴⁶ However, in the rebranded era, Liverpool has been less successful. Specifically, they have not won the Premiership and 2004/5 was their first Champions League final appearance. As previously noted, Champions League qualification has become the new criteria for success and, in this era, the league placing which grants qualification to Europe's premier tournament has been lowered as a result of pressure from super clubs. For the first time in 1997/8 season, teams finishing in second place in the leading national leagues across Europe were granted access to the Champions League competition. Banks (2002) and King (2003) have both suggested that this change was principally made to sustain viewer interests in the lucrative national television markets of England, France, Italy, Spain and Germany. Moreover, this trend continued as the number of participating clubs from the lucrative television markets continued to expand, reaching a maximum of four teams in the 1998/9 season competition as the number of participating clubs grew from 24 to 32 teams. This meant that the standard of the level of *acceptable achievement* had been gradually lowered. Many Liverpool supporters felt that this had manifested in their team's play. Thus, in the summer of 2004, after finishing in fourth place in the Premiership, a consensus amongst the sample of Liverpool fans decided that Champions League qualification via fourth place in the Premiership was no longer *acceptable*. This disharmony is also evident in Chapter Four, which looks at the conditions under which xenophobic discourse prevails. Liverpool fan (8) demonstrates how such dissatisfaction was carried into May 2005:

⁴⁶ The European Cup had been running since the 1955/6 season (in which it was won by Real Madrid) and in the form of a 'knock out' cup competition from which the winners from each round progressed and the losers were eliminated. The three rounds which preceded the final consisted of two 'legs' which were played at either side 'home' ground, whilst the final was decided in one game which was held at a 'neutral' arena.

Is it not a sad reflection on today's game, that it is more important to finish 4th in your domestic table than become Champions of Europe????

Where are people's values at??? Football should be all about trophies...I understand that it's a business now (boring)... but what these businesses should understand, is that REAL fans pay for the 'business', and what the real fans want is results on the pitch...i.e Champions of Europe....not 4th place in a league that has always paled compared to the old 1st division....

Liverpool fan (8) (26th May 2005)

Here, the general dissatisfaction had reawakened by the fact that despite winning the 2004/5 Champions League Liverpool's entry to the following season's competition was threatened because they finished in fifth place in the Premiership, three points adrift of local rivals Everton, who were granted entry into the Champions League qualifying round. Thus, Liverpool fan (8) is making the point that as long as UEFA rewards high placing league finishers, (rather than only national champions) with entry to the Champions League will never be a league of 'champions'. This attitude is mirrored by Oldham Athletic fan (2) who argued that '[w]orse than the Premiership - you can finish 30 points off the winners and still qualify for the "Champions' League"' (10th June 2004).

EXPERIENCING EUROPE: NARRATIVE AND SILENCE

The results of this section clearly demonstrate two contrasting patterns. The first, found in the pro-European club competition frames, is that Liverpool fan narratives are generally legitimising European club competitions, with a particular emphasis on the Champions League. On the other hand, the second pattern is that Oldham Athletic fans are not rejecting European club competitions but that it plays little part in their supporter experiences. Table 3.02 provides the crudest point in the data analysis because it shows coded rather than descriptively framed data, but illustrates that

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European club competition is more significant to the Liverpool fan group (by demonstrating that 97.26 per cent of all European club competition discourse was provided by Liverpool fans) than their Oldham Athletic equivalents. By referring to Figure 2.01, this section will demonstrate how this shows that Liverpool fans have developed identifications with a Europe defined by UEFA club competition, even if they are at a weak level (which is assumed even though the methodology does not accurately allow for testing of identification strength) which Oldham Athletic fans have not.

The first significant point is that the data in Table 3.04 suggests that Liverpool supporters generally speak about European club competition in positive ways, although this may predominantly be in a different way to boardroom members, such as Chief Executive Rick Parry. Liverpool fans are therefore more likely to view both the Champions League and the UEFA Cup as opportunities to travel across Europe (57.82 per cent of the pro-European club competition master frame) rather than generating club revenue (9.86 per cent of the pro-European club competition master frame). Rather, some Liverpool fans even reject the Champions League's revenue generation dimension by envisaging it as detrimental to long term club prospects and subsequent fan experiences. This pattern can be found in the remedial anti-European club competition master frame and suggests that the link between the commercial values of the club and fans' identifications are perhaps not as linear as Martin (2005) and Sandvoss (2003) have both argued. Rather, lived experiences help to shape identities/identifications and the data shows that European narratives were developed through European fan experiences. Examples of this include accounts given by Liverpool fans (1) and (2) which concur with the findings of King (2000; 2003) in his

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research with Manchester United fans. Thus, favourable narratives are told about *perceptions* of Europe, which in this case are shaped by trans-European club competition football.

Second, the competition does not simultaneously fracture identifications with Europe by providing enduring 'others' who may be consistently cast as an out-group. The section results did not find a group of opposition fans that were significantly disliked by the Liverpool collective. This may be a direct result of the lasting and genuinely remorseful narratives of the Heysel disaster (1985) in which 39 Juventus fans died during the 1985 European Cup final. This story is still dominant in many fans' real and imagined memories. The enduring impact of this showed fans that European travels should not be characterised by hooligan battles (as Williams *et al* 1992 [1984] point out they were for some England fans in the 1980s) but as an opportunity to celebrate the European experience in a carnival-esque way. Evidence of the lasting shadow of the Heysel disaster is given by Liverpool fan (9):

I'm just glad that we played Juventus on route to the final. The two ties helped exorcise some ghosts from 20 years ago, and try to build on friendship. Imagine if we hadn't played them by now, the shadow of Heysel would cast an even darker gloom.
RIP 39 and 96.

Liverpool fan (9) (23rd May 2005)

This marks a difference between the Liverpool fan group and the supporter group which King researched, in that he noted that Manchester United fans are beginning to develop violent rivalry with the fans of clubs such as Juventus and Feyenoord (2000: 425). This 'othering' has become an important way in which the formation of some European identification is notional. Yet, because of the enduring Heysel narrative,

Liverpool fans have not developed this particular ambiguity.⁴⁷ Of course, this is not to imply that Liverpool fans have developed unambiguous European identifications. For instance, whilst King (2000; 2003) found that a select number of Manchester United fans referred to themselves as 'European', Liverpool supporters never drew upon the self-definition of European identification. This indicates that whilst the supporters enjoy their European fan travel experiences they do not see themselves as *explicitly* European. So, whilst there are Liverpool supporter group indications of European identifications, as conferred through positive narratives and the failure to recognise non-British European football fans as *others*, the strength of identification is fairly weak. However, this is still more evident than amongst Oldham Athletic fans, which are clearly not developed in the same way. The next section will shift the focus of territorial identification away from Europe towards English national culture.

THE DIMENSIONS AND FRAMES OF NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

Data presented in Table 3.05 shows that 79.71 per cent of Oldham Athletic fan comments relating to national identification articulated support for such cultures. This was markedly different to the Liverpool supporter narrative, which illustrated that 79.11 per cent of similar comments rejected the idea. However, Table 3.06 moves beyond this by dividing such legitimising and resisting narratives into four master frames. The first of these refers to affirmative pro-English/British comments and covers very clear statements that highlight reasons to articulate national identifications (usually centred upon a confusing conflation of Englishness and Britishness). The second frame addresses affirmative anti-national identification discourses that draw attention to clear reasons why such cultures are undesirable. The

⁴⁷ There is even a strong argument to suggest that even intra-European hooliganism may not invalidate claims to common European cultures if such activities transcend national boundaries.

third frame articulates remedial pro-national identification sentiments which respond to an affirmative anti-national identification discourse. The final frame is a remedial anti-national identification discourse which is reactive to the affirmative pro-national identification frame, by offering reasons why affirmations of national cultures should be critiqued. This data shows that Liverpool fans most frequently utilise remedial anti-national identification frames which account for 73.30 per cent of their supporter group national culture-themed comments. On the other hand, Oldham Athletic fans most frequently drew upon affirmative pro-national identification frames, which accounted for 53.81 per cent of their equivalent comments. Overall, the sample of comments was fairly evenly weighted, with Liverpool fans contributing 49.52 per cent of all national identification comments, compared to Oldham Athletic supporters' 50.48 per cent. The next part of the chapter will look at the secondary frames which are located within the three utilised master frames.

AFFIRMATIVE PRO-NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION FRAME

The affirmative pro-national identification master frame was composed of four secondary frames (see Table 3.07) and was most heavily utilised by Oldham Athletic fans (who accounted for 80.14 per cent of all discourse within the frame). This was the frame Oldham Athletic fans most commonly used and the second most common amongst Liverpool supporters (Table 3.06). The secondary frame that Oldham Athletic supporters most frequently drew upon was 'patriotism/national identification is a positive force', whereas Liverpool supporters most often used the idea that 'national identification is prevalent during major football tournaments because of support for club players'. This section will further explore the use of the secondary frames to support this master frame. The first one to be considered is that national

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identification is prevalent during major football tournaments through support for club players.

National identification is prevalent during major football tournaments because of support for club players

It has been noted elsewhere that during times of international football tournaments some fans may choose to support their club players by forming loyalties to the international team they play for (Williams 1999; Levermore and Millward 2007). This focus of loyalty can be levelled at the nation the supporter/team heralds, or others. In Chapter Four the endurance of such identifications – especially when related to non-English players - is questioned, yet frames which give examples of such loyalties to England nevertheless constitute a form of English national identification. This was the most frequently used secondary affirmative pro-national identification frame amongst Liverpool fans, constituting 39.28 per cent (11 comments) of master frame comments. Oldham Athletic supporters did not give any such comments, but given that they did not have any English international players during the time of the data collection, this is not surprising. Liverpool fan (10) typically articulates these (probably weak) sentiments:

Its a great tournament, far better quality football than the world cup. with inglund playin at least we get to see some of our reds playin mid season. But as for the rest of the inglund team don't really care if they come down with the Portuguese trots or a dose of clap!

Liverpool fan (10) (1st June 2004)

The message from Liverpool fan (10) only moderately expresses his English national identification through support for Liverpool players at the Euro2004 Championships. This was despite making clear that he is from Walton (in Liverpool) in other

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comments. In doing this, he refers to England as 'Inglund', a term that is not usually endearing, while articulating that he does not care if other players pick up ailments or illnesses. This is the weakest form of affirmative pro-national identification discourse given that it offers only notional support for the English football team. The next frame will look at a stronger form of support by considering the 'fun' involved in supporting the English national team.

It is fun to support the English football team during major tournaments

Tellingly, this proved to be less commonly used by Liverpool supporters than the last frame, accounting for just 5 comments (17.86 per cent) within the affirmative pro-national identification discourse. However, Liverpool fan (11) provides one example:

Never been one for the England flags, but to be honest, I'm looking for one to put on my wagon this year just to join in and be a part of it. Y'know what makes me laugh – I know some of you will come on here saying shit like "I'm not fucking English", yet I'll my bottom dollar on that at least 75% of you will be out watching the Ing-ur-lund games, cheering every Michael Owen goal. By the way, all you non-England fans, which country where you born in? Don't expect people to wear the plazzy newspaper-sponsored hats or to sing 'no surrender' songs, but why not support OUR national team.

Liverpool fan (11) (31st May 2004)

Liverpool fan (11)'s communication affirms a sense of Englishness by arguing that a non-exclusionary support of the national football team – such as rejecting songs which have connotations to the British political far-Right ('no surrender') – can be an enjoyable experience. However, this was not a common sentiment amongst Liverpool supporters. On the other hand, it was more usual within the Oldham Athletic assemblage. Indeed, 23 Oldham Athletic supporter comments, accounting for 20.35 per cent of the total Oldham Athletic affirmative pro-national identification frame,

described themselves as English – at least in part – because it was fun to support the English national team. An example of this is summed up by Oldham Athletic fan (3), recounting a narrative of how he followed the English national team in Portugal, during the Euro2004 Championships:

Had probably one of the best weeks of my entire life. Whatever anyone says, this country is amazing. The sight of thousands upon thousands of English FANS taking over every single corner of Lisbon, and Portugal as a whole, was superb. Didn't see one bit of trouble apart from two [']Portugeezers['] having a bit of a scuffle with each other in the ground. No other country in the entire world can show that sort of pride and loyalty. I'm telling you now, every single country in that tournament could only look at England and it's fans with awe. This really has made me PROUD TO BE ENGLISH.

ENGLAND TIL I DIE

Oldham Athletic fan (3) (26th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (3)'s comment is not unexpected, the club he supports is in the lower divisions and Crabbe (2004: 68) argues that 'for football fans, particularly fans of smaller clubs without access to European competition, the World Cup [and European Championship] provides a ... bonus lying outside the confines of the domestic calendar'. Similarly, Perryman (1999: 16) argues that following England on international trips allows supporters to 'taste the local delicacies, sample the nightlife, even take in a few sights ... somewhere more exotic than the proverbial wet Wednesday night away trip to Hartlepool'. The way Crabbe distinguishes between those clubs who qualify for European club competition and those who do not, is vital to this chapter's argument. Hence, Perryman is arguing that international tournaments have provided Oldham Athletic fan (3) with a party-like atmosphere. From the trans-European club competition section, it was noticeable that many of the Liverpool collective already experience this feeling on European 'away' trips. Oldham Athletic

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fan (3) takes these experiences from England matches played in *foreign* countries such as Portugal and because he perceives the magnitude and incidence of English hooliganism as declining, declares himself as 'PROUD TO BE ENGLISH'. The next frame builds upon this by looking at how patriotism – not exclusively connected to football – may be considered to be a positive socio-cultural force.

Patriotism/national identification is a positive force

From data presented in Table 3.07, it is noticeable that this was the most popular affirmative pro-national identification frame used by Oldham Athletic fans. This frame covered the opinion that patriotism is a positive force which should be rejoiced and accounts for 79.65 per cent of comments within the given master frame. Oldham Athletic fan (4) provides an example of this discourse:

I'm proud to be English and British and any show of patriotic pride is a positive thing.

Oldham Athletic fan (4) (9th June 2004)

Interestingly, Oldham Athletic fan (4) highlights his dual pride to be both defined as both English and British. However, Kumar (2003; 2003a) has pointed out that historically, there has been an English-led assumption that Englishness *is* Britishness. He argues that this should be questioned.⁴⁸ Fellow Oldham Athletic fan (5) reiterates the patriotic frame expressed by Oldham Athletic fan (4), but asserts his national identification as English:

⁴⁸ Boyle and Haynes (2000) extend this by arguing that this is most evident in the reportage of sports events through the national media who use 'English' imagery (i.e. the 'White-cliffs' of Dover) to represent British events.

Im very very very proud to be English and no mistake. Unashamedly proud and fly the flag of St George all year round in my garden. If there's one thing we all could learn from the American's it's to wave the flag and be proud in our countries democracy, really proud.

Oldham Athletic fan (5) (27th April 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (5) is communicating the subject of his patriotism to England, not Britain. In the cultural context of football this is not uncommon in that Kumar (2003: 262) points out that during the 1998 World Cup there had been a resurgence in popularity of the St. George's flag, rather than the Union Jack, amongst English sports fans.⁴⁹ This confuses the focus of British national loyalties – do people feel British or English/Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish? It is also possible that they may display multiple attachments. These types of questions were not just asked by Oldham Athletic fans, but also some Liverpool supporters (such as (12)) who also felt the need to affirm his support to the ambiguous English or British identification nexus.

im english and an english fan. I suport england if they're playing rugby and GB in the Olympics.

Liverpool fan (12) (1st June 2004)

Therefore the comments by Oldham Athletic fan (4) and Liverpool fan (12) highlight that the focus of national loyalty is not always clear as English or British. Liverpool fan (12) tells us that he is English, so supports England in what ever sport they play and Great Britain in the Olympic Games. However, the occasional fracture of British national identification also provides space for English national identities to be articulated against other forms of British identification. This is considered in the next frame.

⁴⁹ For further details see King (2006) who reminds us of now famous scenes during the 1990 World Cup, in which the English fans – having seen their team defeated by Germany in a penalty shoot-out-waved Union Jacks (often with club names embossed horizontally) around the Stadio Delle Alpi, with only a few St. George's flags in evidence.

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Articulated against other British national identities

This frame was a not excessively used, accounting for 5 Liverpool fan comments (17.86 per cent) within the affirmative pro-national identification master frame. As considered in the previous frame, the 'break up of Britain' (see also Nairn 2001; Bryant 2006) has increased the chances of the articulation of English identifications against non-English 'others'. On the other hand, Moorhouse (1996) and Diamond (1999) argue that the move has led to greater national 'freedoms' by addressing the fact that there are more nations in the UK than just England. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the field of football, in which the four British nations have their own sports teams. This cultural exclusion was countered by a small number of Liverpool fans who argued that the only time they ever really identified with an idea of Englishness was in its 'otherness' to the Celtic regions of the UK and Ireland.⁵⁰

Liverpool fan (13) expresses one example of this after England's dramatic 2-1 defeat to France in Euro2004:

There is no more unattractive sight than bitter Celts openly displaying their poison. They'll be going on about that for years. Their own sides are so shite that they become more interested in England than the English. It's all very sad. Thinking about it, its only when we come under nationalistic attack that I ever feel remotely English.

Those people cheering most loudly last night like to play the oppressed underdog card, but there's real bitter pathetic hatred there, and if they were English people would probably be toasting the empire and voting BNP.

Nationalism is for gobshites.

Liverpool fan (13) (14th June 2004)

This is particularly interesting because King (2006) argues that Englishness was once defined as the domination and incorporation of the Celtic regions of the UK and yet,

⁵⁰ Although only five Liverpool fans reported this, such was the small number of this group who affirmed national identity, they accounted for 17.86 per cent of the 'positive' count. Interestingly, Oldham Athletic fans did not report this as a reason for affirming 'Englishness'.

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some Liverpool fans see opposition to strong patriotism of non-English British people as the only way they would define themselves as *English*. Underlying all this is an active dislike of nationalism as an ideology– which is further detected in the subsequent frames. Thus, paradoxically, it an active dislike of nationalism which ultimately creates an interim sense of 'Englishness'. The next frame will look at how fans have used affirmative discourse to oppose English and British identities/identifications.

AFFIRMATIVE ANTI-NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION

This frame accounted for discourse which actively rejected national identification. In other words, this frame *attacked* the notion of national identification rather than defending the right not to feel nationalistic (the remedial anti-national identification master frame covers this discourse). This master frame was more commonly utilised by Liverpool supporters than Oldham Athletic fans in that it was the third most heavily used master frame by the former group (accounting for 13.11 per cent of all nationalism discourse) but was used least often by the latter (accounting for 7.14 per cent of similar discourse, see Table 3.06). It is more likely that people will reject the notion of national identification (i.e. remedial anti-national frames) than outwardly attack its foundations (this frame). Therefore this master frame was composed of only one secondary frame. This was the idea that nationalism is a regressive attitude.

Nationalism is a regressive attitude

Data in Table 3.07 shows that this frame was utilised 27 times by Liverpool fans and on 15 occasions by Oldham Athletic equivalents. In many respects, this discourse is

conducive with the remedial xenophobic frames outlined in Chapter Four which argue that differences between people from other countries are illegitimate. Thus, in this frame, nationalism is attacked because of its conflation with xenophobia. Liverpool fan (14) and Oldham Athletic fan (6) show how this frame was typically utilised:

Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel and the thief and the cunt in the bookies who reckons the jockey has just done him out of the placepot. It's just all xenophobic bollocks for yanks and palestinians!!! Oh and jocks and taffs and paddies and cockernees...

Liverpool fan (14) (30th May 2004)

The waving of ANY flag shows nothing more than insecurity about your identity. I don't need to wave a flag to be proud to be English. Nobody gave a flying feck about St George's day until the Irish made St. Patrick's Day the national day of getting pissed and now we want to join the gang.

The whole idea is like thinking that the golden age of TV included Alf Garnett and Love Thy Neighbour, and that Enoch Powell was a regular thinking liberal. The problem with this country is that we are so obsessed in remembering how great we WERE without realising that it counts for feck all.

Oldham Athletic fan (6) (27th April 2004)

The common theme in both comments is the assumption that national identities exclude *others*. Liverpool fan (14) directly equates patriotism to xenophobia, by connoting expressions to 'scoundrel[s]', 'thei[ves]' and 'cunt[s] in the bookies', all of which subjectively provide unflattering social roles. Ironically he accuses 'Yanks' (citizens of the USA), 'Palestinians', 'Jocks' (Scottish nationals), 'Paddies' (people from Republic of Ireland) and 'Cockney's' (those who hail from London) of being *different* because they show nationalistic traits. In line with the frames in Chapter Four, such allegations allude to 'illegitimate ethno-difference' – the claim that 'others' have inherently different temperaments – and is a principle that xenophobic parties throughout Europe use to mobilise citizen support (Rydgren 2003; 2004).

Oldham Athletic fan (6) recounts similar sentiments in that he also equates nostalgic

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national pride with xenophobia by rejecting calls from the tabloid press to make St. George's Day a national holiday. In doing this, on the one hand, he is rejecting nationalism as a whole (i.e. '[t]he waving of ANY flag shows nothing more than insecurity about your identity') whilst on the other, specifically attacking the racist segments of the past British society (i.e. '[t]he whole idea is like thinking that the golden age of TV included Alf Garnett and Love Thy Neighbour, and that Enoch Powell was a regular thinking liberal').

REMEDIAL PRO-NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION FRAME

The remedial pro-national identification frame demonstrates national pride by offering a *defence* against affirmative anti-nationalistic accusations. The Oldham Athletic collective demonstrated strong patriotic sentiments by heavily supporting this defence from the previous master frame attack: 26.67 per cent of all pro/anti national identification discourse could be summed up within this (see Table 3.06). This compares favourably to the *attack* provided in the last frame, which accounted for 7.14 per cent of all similar Oldham Athletic discourse (Table 3.06). On the other hand, no Liverpool fan comments defended national identification from similar claims. This is noteworthy given that Liverpool fans more rigorously utilised the previously discussed frame. The secondary frame that Oldham Athletic fans utilised to do this was that 'patriotism is not a regressive attitude'.

Patriotism is not a regressive attitude

This frame concurred with the argument in the previously discussed frame which suggested that national pride is not necessarily exclusionary. A sizable number of

Oldham Athletic fan comments (fifty six) drew upon this frame. Oldham Athletic fans (4) and (7) provide two examples:

I'm looking forward to tonight's match as much as anyone else, and really hope we win - but I don't resort to suggesting we're a superior race - that IS racist! And I'm not being a do-gooder either, I'm simply pointing out what is fact. There's nothing wrong with supporting an English team against a French one, I always do (even if it's Man U), but there's a whole difference between that and saying we're a superior race.

Oldham Athletic fan (7) (13th June 2004)

One thing that did happen, upon getting a taxi from the Pineapple in Shaw to Oldham town Center was the taxi driver who must have been in his sixties was quite obviously a Muslim, and he had a big grey beard. I asked him if he watched the game, and he told me he did. He said it reminded him of Mark Hughes against Oldham, and that was the last time he'd been as upset about football. Do you not get it, you gloating anti english scumbags we're all in it together, you really don't have a clue.

Oldham Athletic fan (4) (14th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (7)'s comment addresses a statement by Oldham Athletic fan (15), which referred to the English as the 'superior race' (explicitly discussed in Chapter Four). Oldham Athletic fan (7)'s message was that the articulation of national identities as hostilities against 'others' was regressive. However, he then pushed forward the case that he expressed pride in many manifestations of *Englishness* (sport providing one example) without denigrating non-national *others*. Therefore, his point is that – particularly in an age of multiculturalism – nationalism is not necessarily exclusionary. This statement is echoed by Oldham Athletic fan (4), who recounts an encounter with a Muslim taxi driver in Oldham who, despite local racial tensions and prominence of the BNP, felt that the English national team – as a symbol of English national identification – represented him. He also pointed out that on a local level, the same taxi driver felt that the Oldham Athletic team, which almost

qualified for the FA Cup final in 1993/4 season, also represented him as a resident of the town. In this case, Oldham Athletic fan (4) is making the persuasive case that national identifications do not have to exclude those who the far-Right see as non-national *others* and that vibrant national loyalties have emerged in the era of multiculturalism – despite the efforts of right wing groups (in both football and politics). The next master frame to be considered is the remedial anti-national identification frame.

REMEDIAL ANTI-NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION FRAME

The remedial anti-national identification frame was opposed to English and British national identities, not by attacking its foundations but by suggesting reasons why fans within both collectives choose not to foster national identifications. Data in Table 3.06 shows how this was by far the most commonly used frame amongst Liverpool supporters (accounting for 73.30 per cent of all national identification discourse) but used less frequently by Oldham Athletic fans (accounting for 12.38 per cent of similar discourse). Liverpool fans employed nine secondary frames to communicate these feelings, whereas Oldham Athletic supporters used just two. The diversity of the secondary frames which Liverpool fans drew upon was wide: some explicitly related to football related incidents, whilst others were due to the multitude of social, political, economic and cultural dynamics (in which football provided one an arena of proliferation). On the other hand, Oldham Athletic fans used secondary frames in a narrower way and tended not to use the explicitly-football centred frames. Thus, three groups of secondary discourse emerged under this master frame. The first addressed political issues which contained cultural resonance such as the ‘rejection of nationalism because of Margaret Thatcher’ and, related to this, that the ‘town/city is

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not part of England'. These frames are exclusively used by Liverpool fans. The second group covered cultural claims that were not specific to football such as the discourses that the 'national media are xenophobic' and related, that 'national identification is an artificial construction which I do not believe in'. These frames were equally likely to be used by both Oldham Athletic and Liverpool supporters. The final group of five secondary frames within the master discourse was related specifically English football nationalism and was solely expressed by Liverpool fans. The next section will begin by looking at the final group of secondary frames, starting with the argument that English football nationalism is for fans of small clubs.

English football nationalism is for small club fans

This group of discourse argues against the 'national identification is prevalent during major football tournaments' secondary frame (found in the affirmative pro-national identification master frame) by showing how national tournaments make some fans feel *less* nationalistic. The first way this might happen is through the rejection of English nationalism as for 'small club' fans. Ten Liverpool fan comments - or 6.62 per cent of the remedial anti-national frame – fell within this frame. This was similar to King's (2000; 2003) research into the identifications of Manchester United fans who he argued were displaying 'urban parochialisms' by believing that their club was in a position where it could challenge the English national team for overall sporting authority. At the centre of this is the connection to the 'European away travel provides the finest fan experience' secondary frame which is located within the affirmative pro-European club competition discourse, in that the travel and leisure experiences which fans like Oldham Athletic fan (3) are experiencing with England (see 'national identification is prevalent during major football tournaments because it

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is fun to support the English football team' frame) are being sneered at by super club fans who have the chance to experience such trips with their clubs. The following comment by Liverpool fan (15) testifies for this theory:

Supporting England is just all so fucking small time. Lets support England because its our only chance of ever seeing a crowd or being at a game with an atmosphere.

The fact is, Liverpool and Man United aren't arsed because we have our own European tours and hopefully success to enjoy - every man and his dog from small shit win nothing clubs tag along with England as its the only time they can go abroad.

Liverpool fan (15) (31st May 2004)

This argument is integral this chapter - if, as King (2000; 2003) argues is the case for Manchester United fans - European fan travel provides the 'finest football experience' (2000: 424), Liverpool fans potentially receive their opportunities through club loyalties, whereas Oldham Athletic supporters can only enjoy this during international football matches. This allows Liverpool fans to report frequent European narratives through club experience, demonstrating the connections between local and transnational identifications. It may be no coincidence that Armstrong and Hognestad (2003) have found that supporters of Brann Bergen, one of Norway's premier clubs, have also expressed a rejection of Norwegian national identification. Thus, transnational experiences may be eroding national identifications for fans of elite European clubs.

English football nationalism is for Southern England

A second way that King (2000; 2003) interprets Manchester United fans as rebuffing English football nationalism is through the rejection of English national identification

as 'no longer a ... universal identity which encompasses all English people but rather only an expression of regionally located groups' which were almost universally located in southern England (King 2003: 210). This is also found in this research and is highlighted by the secondary frame which posits that English football nationalism is for the South of England. This discourse resonated in 11 Liverpool fan statements, which accounted for 7.28 per cent of the anti-national identification frame (see Table 3.07). Liverpool fan (16) gives one example:

I really can't be arsed with it all the fuss about England - I never have seen what all the fuss is about to be honest, even from an early age. England doesn't push the right buttons with me!! Can't get motivated over a national team in a nation which doesn't give a fuck about anyone from north of the Watford gap - I'm not easily swayed by the media like some and stick to my beliefs.

Liverpool fan (16) (1st June 2004)

The essence of Liverpool fan (16)'s communication is that it is difficult for him to feel any affection for English football nationalism, when as a resident of Liverpool, he feels that the English FA do not seem to take people like him into account when making provisions for England football games. This may be a result of over 100 years of a north-south divide in England (see Bryant 2006). This point may be underlined by fact that the FA and British government jointly chose to build the 'new Wembley', a replacement for the former English national stadium, in London rather than in Birmingham where, at £324m, it was estimated it would cost half the price than the southern-based choice (*BBC Sport* 2001). However, deeper than this, King (2003: 210) argues the rejection of the English national team may be because English nationalism is seen to be an appropriate form of identification of the South. This will be further illustrated in the 'rejection because of Margaret Thatcher', but retaining the

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football centred theme, the frame that 'English football nationalism is for small town inhabitants' will be explored next.

English football nationalism is for small town inhabitants

Liverpool fans' perception that national identification was only for small town inhabitants was also significant as part of the 'urban parochial' rejections of Englishness. This is likely to be related to the 'English football nationalism is for small club fans' frame, given the assumed linkage between residents and football team support. Once again, this frame was not utilised by Oldham Athletic supporters but accounted for 9.27 per cent of the remedial anti-English/British national identification master frame (see Table 3.07). An example of this was given by Liverpool fan (17):

Just driven back from Middlewich. Saw about 6 thousand people carriers with little St. George flags attached above the back doors. All looking a bit shit really.

Liverpool fan (17) (31st May 2004)

In this account, Liverpool fan (17) demonstrates how, as a Liverpool fan and resident, he sees himself as superior to residents of Middlewich who displayed symbols of nationalism which look 'a bit shit'.⁵¹ This emphasised how Liverpool fans perceive themselves as 'elevated' above nationalistic sentiment. The next frame will stay within this band of remedial anti-English/British national identification discourse by demonstrating how a frame that argued that home club had been demonised whilst playing for England was drawn upon.

⁵¹ Middlewich is an affluent, small Cheshire town.

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Our players have been demonised whilst playing for England

This frame drew upon subjectively unfavourable narratives which showed how club players had been victimised by the crowd whilst playing for England. In truth, this was a marginal discourse, accounting for just 1.99 per cent (3 comments) of Liverpool fan comments within the remedial anti-English/British national identification master frame. Yet, this does not mean that it was without impact. Indeed, Liverpool fan (18) demonstrates how this experience may have negatively impacted upon the way he thinks about football-led English nationalism with the following comment:

What about that treatment Barnes got in the 90s? All the bad press that Liverpool gets and you're expected to get pally cos its England. Fuck that!

Liverpool fan (18) (1st June 2004).

The incident Liverpool fan (18) is specifically referring to occurred on 17th February 1993 when Liverpool winger John Barnes was booed by a section of England supporters at Wembley after a poor national team performance.⁵² At the time, many felt that he was being made the 'scapegoat' for the team's underachievement as they struggled (and eventually failed) to qualify for the 1994 World Cup. This followed extreme racism which the Jamaican born Barnes had experienced earlier in his career. Indeed, an often displayed photograph was once taken of Barnes, in full Liverpool kit and mid-match, kicking away a banana which had been hurled at him. Additionally, in his early England days, both Barnes and fellow black player Mark Chamberlain were reportedly subject to frequent threats from racist groups. With this treatment, once again, there are similarities to King's (2003: 196-9) study of contemporary

⁵² This game was a World Cup qualifying game in which England beat San Marino 6-0.

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Manchester United supporters who had increasingly distanced themselves away from the English national team after the abuse that their then-midfield player David Beckham had received from England fans after his dismissal in the 1998 World Cup quarter final match against Argentina (a match which England eventually lost in a penalty shoot-out). These actions helped to facilitate England as the *other* in both the collective mindsets of many Liverpool and Manchester United supporters and helped erode any sense of national identification felt by supporters.

England team acts as a threat to club interests

The last four frames have showed how England has become the *other* that some Liverpool fans see their club interests/activities as elevated above. However, England is also a threat to the well being of home players. A social distance has been created by Liverpool fans to an idea of *Englishness* which is then used as the *other* which the strong collective club-based identification can be built. An additional frame which maintains this distance might be one which argues that the 'England team acts as a threat to club interests' by injuring/tiring out their players. This is now considered.

Within the remedial anti-English/British national identification master frame, this discourse accounts for 16.56 per cent of all Liverpool fan comments (Table 3.07) and is a typical G14 argument against international matches (this is discussed at length in Chapter Six). At the start of the Euro2004 Championships, Liverpool fan (16) typified this frame by claiming:

I want England to get knocked out at the first opportunity so our players are on the plane and home sharpish without injuries!

Liverpool fan (16) (1st June 2004).

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Once more, this frame resonates with research by King who found that Manchester United fans wanted England to experience failure in major international tournaments so that their players would return to the club without injury (King 2003: 209). These sentiments are also found in Liverpool fans' discourse. Indeed, the argument is strong enough to suggest that Liverpool supporters – much like their rivals at Manchester United – now see England as 'just another shit team' (Liverpool fan (14), 3rd June 2004). However, there are two crucial differences between England and Liverpool's Premiership or Champions League rivals. First, they have the opportunity to play club opposition but the chance to show supremacy over England has never happened in a meaningful fixture. Thus, England is an unchallengeable rival. Second, also unlike club rivals, the frustration with England is that they also take their players to achieve their goals (and sometimes injure them in the process). This would not happen at club level: Liverpool's rivals do not have any authority to take their players in order to win games. In many senses, England and club teams are like oil and water – the two teams are intrinsically different and will never mix together, but Liverpool fans have grown increasingly frustrated that the 'oily' England team's interests are perceived to rise above their own in a potentially threatening way. On a football centred level, this has gnarled at positive identifications with an image of England, on at least the level of the national football team. The next two secondary frames will move away from the football specific rejection of national identification to show the members within both groups are personally rejecting the idea of nationalism because of other English and British cultural performances.

National identification is an artificial/human construction

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This frame echoes the theory that national identifications are entirely imagined to be 'real' but are still taken as a cornerstone in modern socio-political thought (see Anderson 1991 [1983]). This frame was the most commonly used Oldham Athletic supporter remedial anti-English/British national identification discourse, with 15 examples. This accounted for 57.69 per cent of Oldham Athletic comments within this master frame (see Table 3.07). The frame was less frequently utilised by Liverpool fans, who gave just two examples (1.33 per cent). Defending against the accusations that national identifications provide citizens with innate and subjectively superior character differences (c.f. illegitimate ethno-difference frame, see Chapter Four), Oldham Athletic fan (8) argues:

I don't want to get into some sort of political argument but I find it hard to understand why people need to show there attachment to a country purely by an accident of birth.

Oldham Athletic fan (8) (9th June 2004)

To understand why Oldham Athletic supporters, such as fan (8) used this frame, it is probably necessary to refer back to the socio-political context of contemporary Oldham (as discussed in Chapter Two) and consider how those residents of Oldham who do not support the BNP have felt 'threatened' by the party since the two race riots in 2001 and the subsequent relative success of the party in subsequent national and local elections. Given that Back *et al.* (2001) claim that the fanzine movement originally arose from left-wing fans who felt threatened by the increasing links between football and the far-right in the 1980s, it is understandable that some Oldham Athletic supporters might be sensitive to an exclusionary *idea* of nationalism. A way of rejecting this is point out that the perceptions of such differences are based upon socially constructed factors that are beyond an individual's control (such as where

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they are born). This discourse is more commonly given by Oldham Athletic supporters but also occasionally provided by Liverpool followers. Liverpool fan (19) provides one example:

Being proud of your nationality is a very odd concept in my opinion, it is completely random and you have almost zero input into your country's greatness as it is all historical? I will have more in common with people of the same demographic breakdown in Europe that I will have with 85% of people my age in this country.

Liverpool fan (19) (6th September 2004)

Liverpool fan (19) echoes some Oldham Athletic fans, such as (8), by arguing that the idea of 'national pride' is socially constructed by the way national narratives are collectively remembered. By remedially framing the pervasive idea of national identification, he points out that he has little commonality with many people in 'this country' but may be much more similar to people 'in Europe'. On an individual level, this narrative is interesting for this research beyond the direct competencies of this frame because Liverpool fan (19) seems to be asking 'why don't we consider ourselves to be European?' He seems to infer an answer to this within the essence of the frame – the socially constructed national boundaries mean that he is seen as English or British rather than coherently *European*. Yet, it is also interesting to consider why he refers to his personal similarities with people *in*, rather than *across*, Europe. This clearly suggests that he does not quite see himself *in* Europe, or presumably, *as* European even though he sees appeal in both ideas. The next frame works alongside this, by remedially arguing against English and British nationalism with the suggestion that the national media show xenophobic inclinations when reporting 'national events'.

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National media are xenophobic

An important way that Anderson (1991 [1983]) saw the 'imagined' national community being created was through the print press, which helped to cultivate national languages. This was a drive from capitalists who felt that, by developing national languages from a small range of composite local dialects, a larger market for products from a printed press would emerge (Anderson 1991 [1983]). Nowadays, the British media use the English language to report issues through the medium of television, radio, newspapers and the Internet which all help to maintain national identities. The argument within this frame is not inherently different to that provided by Anderson, by arguing that, by placing subjectively *favourable* slants onto stories which reflect nationhood, the national media can be often seen as xenophobic. Issues such as international sports competition, which directly pits nation against each other provides an avenue for this to develop. Data in Table 3.07 shows that a number of Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fan comments demonstrated an awareness of this by using the frame to remedially talk about English jingoism. This is illustrated is the comments by Oldham Athletic fan (9) and Liverpool fan (20):

The Sun said yesterday that the "day was one of the biggest matches EVER in Englands history"

Eh? This kind of attitude sums up what is wrong with England and its fans, too much hype but not much substance. All this driving around with cheap tacky plastic flags on, stupid tabloid bleating on about the superiority of the English over others whilst not winning a major tournament for 38 years. Its almost racist.

The time for flags and gloating is when we actually win something! Until then, we will always fall flat on our faces and until we have a team to be proud of, don't ask me to join in.

Oldham Athletic fan (9) (14th June 2004)

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I find commentaries on ITV ignorant and xenophobic at the best of times - this is a further indication of just how ignorant and racist a lot of people involved in the game still are.

Liverpool fan (20) (22nd April 2004)

The common message which defines this frame is that the national media are xenophobic, and because of this, the supporters are rejecting national identifications as 'almost racist' (Oldham Athletic fan (9)) or 'ignorant and xenophobic' (Liverpool fan (20)). The next two secondary frames will show remedial anti-national identification sentiments by looking at politically orientated issues which contained cultural resonance. The first of these is that the 'town/city is not part of England'

Town/City is not of England

This frame was borrowed from the *RAOTL* website introduction, which declared that Liverpool was 'in England, but not of it' and was the most frequently used secondary frame by Liverpool fans within the remedial anti-national identification master frame (accounting for 24.50 per cent of all such discourse, see Table 3.07). It was not utilised by Oldham Athletic supporters. The message behind this frame is that, as a consequence of various social and political issues, the city has 'rejected' England to develop a unique culture. This suggests that those who use this discourse feel no attachment to the nation. One such example is given by Liverpool fan (6) in the run up to the Euro2004 Championships:

St. George - he's everywhere isn't he?
IN FUCKING LIVERPOOL!!!!
Made the long trek from Bootle to Halewood today to see me arl [old]
Dad via 2 bus journeys. And if George isn't flying from every other car
(especially taxis), he's draped from countless shop, pub, and house
windows.
And all the England shirts on peoples backs!!!

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Mainly kids, but lots of adults too. More even than Red and Blue shirts, and I've NEVER known that before, even during previous major tournaments.

DON'T THESE PEOPLE KNOW THEY'RE NOT ENGLISH????

It's the one thing that made me proud of being scouse - the fact that we had nothing to do with all that shite

Liverpool fan (6) (29th May 2004)

Liverpool fan (6)'s comments contrast with those of the Oldham Athletic supporters highlighted in the affirmative pro-national identification master frame (see, for instance, comments by Oldham Athletic fans (4) and (5)). Therefore, while Oldham Athletic fan (5) was 'very proud' to be English, Liverpool fan (6) was 'proud of being scouse' (a local term which describes people from Liverpool) because he believes that Liverpool people are not nationalistic. The discourse within this frame did not explicitly detail the multiple reasons for this; however, one possible reason did spiral from the next, associated frame, which is that national identification was rejected because of former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990) and her policies.

National identification rejected because of Margaret Thatcher

Although unemployment, casual labour and poverty were nothing new to Liverpool, the 1980s brought steep local decline. According to Lane (1987), it was obvious that the city needed help in the form of cash injection from the Thatcher-led Conservative Government to halt further urban decline. However, these funds were not immediately forthcoming and rather than invoke sympathy, the national press continued with a barrage of criticism of the city and its people. Many people in Liverpool principally blamed Margaret Thatcher. Even during the data collection period, narratives were told which denigrated *Englishness* because of its subjective

connotations to Thatcher. As a result, 23.18 per cent of all remedial anti-national identification Liverpool supporter discourse comes from this frame (Table 3.07).

Liverpool fans (3) and (10) provided examples of how this was used:

I don't feel any malice - but the inglund team, the flag, English institutions I don't feel they represent my beliefs or me. I know some might think that very sad.... that I am sad for still thinking like that. But I still remember and I wont forget.

Liverpool fan (3) (1st June 2004)

The reason I feel nothing towards inglund is I still feel bitter about what happened under Thatcher. Simple as that. I saw the north feel the brunt of her economic policy, I lived through the north paying for the wealth that was being created in the south, I saw people doing really well down there at our expense. She was waving the flag, not for us all but primarily for the south. I associate the flag with her, with the south, with rule Britannia its not something I can associate with.

Liverpool fan (10) (1st June 2004)

Both comments therefore illustrate that a rejection from 'inglund' is partially due to enduring memories from Thatcher's political tenure. The articulated perception was that Thatcher represented a 'southern' dimension of Englishness that oppressed many in the north, and most notably, Liverpool. As a result, Liverpool supporters, such as (3) and (10) do not feel as if the national political institutions represent their interests and so 'feel nothing' towards England. The next section of the chapter will now draw together the data from the national identification frames to argue that Oldham Athletic fans are embracing Englishness, whilst Liverpool supporters resist it.

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION: 'US' AND 'THEM'

The results of this section and Tables 3.05-3.07 clearly demonstrate two patterns. The first, found in the pro-national identification frames is that Oldham Athletic fans are

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largely legitimising a sense of Englishness (which is sometimes framed as Britishness). In contrast, the second pattern is that Liverpool supporters are rejecting it. Referring to Figure 2.01 (discussed in Chapter Two), this can be analysed by separating the discursive sense of identification into its three composite parts – narrative, self-identification and social relationships. These will now be discussed in respect of both clubs.

Oldham Athletic: providing English/ British legitimacy

The results of this section show that Oldham Athletic fans are legitimising the idea of national identification. Evidence to make this claim comes from data in Table 3.05 which demonstrates that 79.71 per cent of all discourse relating to national identification was favourable. Furthermore, as this data was broken down by frame in Table 3.06, 53.81 per cent of discourse unambiguously framed national identification in a positive way, whilst 26.67 per cent of comments defensively reacted to a small proportion (7.14 per cent) of discourse which attacked the idea of national identification. On the basis of this, most national identification-themed discourse emanating from Oldham Athletic fans was positive. However, the tangent questions which emerge from this data concern the mechanisms that help to produce strong national identities/identifications for Oldham Athletic supporters. These will now be considered.

The first process which is significant is self-definition. A principal pattern in the research results was that Oldham Athletic fans described themselves as English or British. This was particularly prevalent in the secondary frame which declared that 'patriotism/national identification is a positive force' (see affirmative pro-national

identification frame). This concretised the notion that the Oldham Athletic collective displayed strong national identifications. Associated to this, the relational dimension of identity/identification showed that other European nations were seen as *others*. It is particularly pertinent to point out that a substantial amount of data was collected around the time of the football European Championships (Euro2004) which pitted European nations against each other. Yet, the boundary of competition is probably insignificant given that anybody who is not seen as English is, in this context, an *outsider*. However, some European nations invoked stronger national emotions than others. For instance, England's football match against France prompted declarations of nationhood whilst the following games against Switzerland and Croatia tended not to. This underlines that it is less important that a nation is European, than it is that the opposing country has a role in national narratives (and resulting collective memories) that define rivalry and produce affirmations of national identification. Such self-proclamations of identification were not frequently aired during periods when the England football team did not play. In such cases the self-definitions of national identification lay dormant but were still present until the next opportunity to show otherness.

However, on rare occasions the English/British national identification was also rejected. This was largely around the period when a flag entitled 'Born in England, die in England' was displayed at several Oldham Athletic league matches. At this point it was decided by some fans that 'nationalism was a socially regressive social attitude' (see anti-national identification master frame in Table 3.07). A major reason why this was the case was that many within the Oldham Athletic fan group were actively opposed to far-Right politics. This was largely a consequence of the

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significant role the BNP play in local political make up and some saw this flag alluding to their anti-immigration rhetoric. Hence, contempt for the far-Right overrode non-English nations as the group's principal *other* because many fans did not want to see their team support as ideologically conducive to the ERP/RRP. Nevertheless, most Oldham Athletic supporters' national identifications were salient as they legitimated a perception of Englishness (which was sometimes stretched to refer to Britishness).

During the football season, when Oldham Athletic were engaged in a full national league programme, other English towns/cities were not *othered* in the same way that non-English countries were during the Euro2004 Championships. This suggests that national loyalties were more significant than local identities. For instance, when faced with League One fixtures against teams such as Blackpool, Hull City and Peterborough United, Oldham Athletic fans did not assert their local identities through self-definition in the way that they had against France during the European Championships (i.e. prior to the game against Milton Keynes Dons, fans did not declare themselves to be 'Oldham-ers'). Yet, this is not to infer that Oldham Athletic supporters did not feel a tight sense of belonging to their local community. Like other forms of identification, this was to rise to the surface during periods of *threat* from others. The open and discursive nature of the data source meant that 'cyber warrior' fans from other clubs could enter their site and make ideological threatening accusations. The strength of local identification became more obvious during these periods. For instance a sole Wigan Athletic fan would frequently appear on the *JKL* messageboard to goad the Oldham Athletic group by referring to them as 'nearly Yorkshire bastards' in reference to Oldham's geographical proximity to the Pennines

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(which mark the Lancashire/Yorkshire border). The popular retort to the Wigan Athletic fan was that he was a 'nearly scouse bastard'. Two important points are taken from this. First, the typical exchange does not mean that Oldham Athletic supporters defined themselves as Lancastrian rather than from Oldham. However, it does hint that their belonging to Lancashire was threatened ('nearly Yorkshire') whilst their association to Oldham was not doubted. Second, the retort that the Wigan Athletic fan was 'nearly scouse' hints at the general disdain felt towards the city of Liverpool from the rest of the UK (for example the idea that Liverpool is *even* worse than Yorkshire). This point will be elaborated in the next section which draws together Liverpool fans relationships to English and British national identifications.

Liverpool: rejecting English and British national identities

Liverpool supporters' identifications dramatically differ from Oldham Athletic fans. Whereas Oldham Athletic fans tended to embrace English nationalism the opposite occurs with Liverpool supporters. Instead, as Table 3.05 demonstrates 79.11 per cent of all national identification discourse looked unfavourably upon the culture. Furthermore, of all national identification data which was broken down by frame, 73.30 per cent gave comments which argued against nationalism (remedial anti-national identification frame). In contrast, the pro-national identification accounted for just 13.59 per cent of discourse. On the basis of this, it is fair to ask, first, how, and second, why, Liverpool fans are rejecting British nationalism?

To begin, Liverpool fans tended to denigrate national identity by overwhelmingly responding to national identification affirmations. These may come from both internal (fellow fan comments) and external (e.g. the media) sources. This form of rejection is different to outwardly attacking the idea of national identification and

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showed how they were not necessarily stating that national community belonging was wrong, but that they did not wish to be part of the culture. The group of fans rejected the particularities of national identification through two broad ways. Although all denigrations were tinged by the experience of football fandom, the first explicitly addressed football centred rejections. Frames included the idea that the English national team was for: small town inhabitants, people from the South of England and fans of small clubs. These results concurred with those of King (2003) and may be considered as a rejection of the imposition of national identification *from above*. This means that Liverpool fans were almost sneering at the 'small time' nature of English fans, who carried out activities that were decided to 'look a bit shit' (see Liverpool fan (17), 31st May 2004). This is inherently linked to the European narratives earlier discussed because a popular idea was that, as a fan of a European super club, they did not *need* England, who instead became an unwelcome distraction. The second way that Liverpool fans rejected national identification was through experiences which were only indirectly related to football. This included a rejection of the xenophobic national media and a continued rebellion against the policies which Margaret Thatcher placed upon the city in the 1980s. This was also manifest in the idea that 'Liverpool is in England, but not of it'.

It is necessary to look to Liverpool's middle-term urban history to understand supporters' mindset. After decades of post-war poverty, the 1980s – the period of Thatcher's political tenure – proved to be difficult for the city. In many respects, the Toxteth riots/uprisings of July 1981 characterised this struggle. Born from multiple reasons, which generally placed poverty and a general lack of hope at the core (Taaffe and Mulhearn 1988), Thatcher did not answer what was intended as a *cry for help* and

continued with neo-liberal policies which tended to benefit the south-east rather than economically weak areas such as Liverpool (Lane 1987; Taaffe and Mulhearn 1988). From the results it must be noted that, despite the events occurring 20-25 years ago, narratives of discontent are still told within the city and have become deeply embedded within its residents' collective memories. For instance, at a public meeting to celebrate the award of the 2008 European Capital of Culture award, the then leader of Liverpool City Council, Mike Storey recognised this by arguing that in the 1980s 'people outside the city didn't want to know them [inside Liverpool] anymore' (Cllr Storey, public meeting, Liverpool University, 22nd February 2005). Thus, many Liverpool people felt that the national government was not responsive to their needs and became manifest in the ideas that the British institutions did not represent them. The fact that these narratives are still recounted provides one reason why Liverpool fans were rejecting English and British national identifications. Additionally, rather than the national public becoming sympathetic to the concerns of Liverpool people, they became subject to unflattering stereotypes. During this period, Liverpool based dramas/soap operas' such as *Brookside* and *Boys From The Blackstuff* were launched. Phil Redmond, who penned the former in its early years, has since stated that he was proud that '*Brookside* challenged very real social issues at a time when nobody else did' (Phil Redmond, public lecture, Liverpool University, 7th September 2005). Therefore whilst *Brookside* documented illegal social taboos such as theft, rape and murder, its competitor soap opera, Manchester's *Coronation Street*, celebrated community values centring on a public house. Thus, the storylines in Merseyside television dramas created and reinforced stereotypes from many within the rest of the UK that Liverpool people were loveable (and not-so-loveable) rogues. This helped to distance many Liverpool people from the rest of the UK. The narratives of Liverpool

fans (21) and (22), who recount stories about meeting their wives' non-Liverpool based families, provide evidence of this stigmatic reputation:

Met my wife's cousin & his missus. They should have been old enough to know better but they launched straight into the watch your wallets etc. Had be polite and give it the oh yeah dead funny like and then they proceed crack on with 'oh but you're all really funny and can have a laugh eh?! We know this lad who's a scouser and he gives as good as he gets

Liverpool fan (21) (21st January 2005).

I had it of the wife's uncle, in Essex. First time I met him, he gave it the watch your wallet gag.

Liverpool fan (22) (21st January 2005).

The point of view of Liverpool fans is rational – why, when the British political system and society seems to reject Liverpool should people in the city choose to culturally legitimate a sense of Englishness by embracing national identification?

The answer is that they have not. However, in football terms Liverpool suffered two more rejections by the British institutions in the 1980s. The first was the Heysel disaster and the second, the Hillsborough tragedy.

Scruton (1999) argues that the Heysel disaster continued to unfairly mould inaccurate perceptions of Liverpool people to the rest of England. He argues that Thatcher manipulated this attitude by castigating all Liverpool fans for the involvement of just a few and further calling for all English clubs to be banned from European club competition for five years (see also Young 1986).⁵³ However, the subsequent Belgian Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry told a different story by pointing out that the Heysel stadium was 'dilapidated' with structurally weak 'columns, crush barriers and steps' and terracing inside the stadium that was 60 years old and poorly maintained

⁵³ In Liverpool's case the ban was elongated to seven years.

(Scraton 1999: 25). Therefore the inquiry did not explicitly blame Liverpool or Juventus fans – although there was undoubtedly some crowd trouble initiated by *both* sides - but saw the Belgian Football Union as the guilty party given their poor ground standards and inadequate ticketing arrangements (ibid: 26).

The second politicised football incident was the Hillsborough disaster, which occurred on 15th April 1989. Some sociologists, such as Boyle (1995) and Scraton (1999) see this as the defining collective Liverpool fan narrative because it was discernible for the death of 96 Liverpool supporters. What happened during this tragedy is still contentious and it is not exactly clear why the incident occurred. Scraton (1999: 239) points out that in the immediate aftermath, Thatcher's Press Secretary, Bernard Ingham, formed the impression that a 'tanked up mob' of Liverpool fans caused the incident. Scraton argues that this move was indicative of the Thatcher administration – driven by moral self-righteousness and a rigid dogma – in which any blame was removed from the dwindling state and placed on the public. Future inquiries in the post-Thatcher years, shifted the blame from supporters, but did not reallocate it on policing strategies. Nevertheless, sections of the mass media followed the lead given by Ingham and reported that Liverpool fans were responsible for the disaster. This was particularly the case in *The Sun* newspaper, which reported that not only were Liverpool fans to blame, but that they also emptied the pockets of incapable and dead supporters. Whilst not exactly advocating *The Sun's* position, sociologists such as Taylor (1989) accepted the stories from many other newspapers by blaming intoxicated fans for the disaster.⁵⁴ Taylor's account highlights that even sociologists, who are partially defined by their critical questioning, believed the myth which was

⁵⁴ In an obituary to Taylor, King (2002a) argued that as other accounts of the disaster came to light, Taylor seemed to rescind his comments.

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banded about British society, namely, that 'scousers' were to blame for this incident. Thus, four dominant issues and incidents, namely, Thatcher's neo-liberal policies, unflattering cultural stereotypes of 'scousers' and the Heysel and Hillsborough tragedies helped to develop a rejection of English national identification *from below*. This means rejecting a notion of Englishness because it has seemingly rejected Liverpool people. So the argument is that there are two dominant forces – from above and below – which help to develop a resistance to national identification.

Together, these forces have assisted the group in gaining self-understanding by reinforcing a pre-existing sense of Liverpool 'exceptionalism' (Belchem 2000). These processes have made local and national identities uncomplimentary and cast England as the 'they/them' group outsiders. The rejection from below may have been instrumental in creating the initial fracture, but for Liverpool fans the role of football is no more than superficial. To explain, Elias and Scotson (1964/1994) have explained that in-group members find it comfortable to imagine themselves as superior to their out-group opponents. In this way, Liverpool fans can imagine themselves as above England football team followers whose 'small time' actions are perceived to be less worthy than the experiences of Liverpool fans. This helps to develop discursive self-identifications as 'not English' and 'proud to be scouse' (Liverpool fan (6), 29th May 2004). This separation was concretised in the run up to 2004/5 Champions League final, as Liverpool fan (23) declared:

This is for US and No ONE else!!

I took loads of stick at work for not wanting the Mancs [Manchester United] to win it in [19]99. Besides the fact it was themas I politely explained to all the johnny come lately to footballI have no interest in sharing their glory. United won it for them, and for their fans, and they had no interest in sharing it with anyone else. Nor should they have.

It will be the same for us. Its not England's, its Liverpool's. It's a club competition, not a national one.

For Liverpool, not England.

Liverpool fan (23) (24th May 2005).

Data in Table 3.9 shows that this comment is representative of Liverpool fans in general, but very different to Oldham Athletic supporter voices who suggested that club sides did represent the nation whilst playing in European competition. Together this data shows that Liverpool fans powerfully define themselves against Englishness and as culturally independent 'scousers' whereas Oldham Athletic supporters wholeheartedly see themselves as English. For Oldham Athletic fans, Englishness refers to 'us/we' whilst for Liverpool supporters such culture represents the 'them/they'. The impact of this will now be discussed in relation to European identifications.

CONCLUSION: WHOSE EUROPE? WHOSE ENGLAND? GROUP CULTURES AND IDENTIFICATIONS

The results of the chapter illustrate that Oldham Athletic supporters are legitimising English and British national identification and Liverpool fans are resisting it. This rejection is created by the *othering* of Englishness to empower 'scouse' identifications. Football is important in this respect because it has proved to be an avenue in which contemporary resistance toward national identification can be developed by European super club supporters as a way of looking down upon the supporter activities of fans of clubs who actively support the English national team (i.e. Oldham Athletic).

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However, even amongst non-European super club fans it would be a mistake to believe that national loyalties override club attachments, although unlike with super clubs such allegiances are not counterpoised. For instance, Oldham Athletic fan (10) argues that a reflection upon the strength of support for his two teams produces a club based winner:

I was pumped up for tonight and thought that we'd win. We were shite once Rooney went off, which makes you think when a national team relies heavily on an eighteen-year-old.

Anyway, we went out on penalties and although I was gutted, it didn't come anywhere near when QPR beat us in the play-offs the season before last.

Oldham Athletic fan (10) (24th June 2004)

It is significant to note that despite the claim that emotions which come from club support overpower those of England, Oldham Athletic fan (10) continues to refer to the England national team as 'us/we'. The importance of this is that tensions have not been substantial enough to call into question the power of national identification (football based or otherwise) in the way which it did amongst for Liverpool fans. Yet, this only suffices the chapter's questions which relate to the *idea* of national identification and does not offer answers to emergent questions around the issue of identifications based upon a perception of Europe. It is obvious that transnational European club competition has impacted upon the constitution of European super clubs with boardroom directors arguing that clubs *belong in Europe*, but this does not constitute a coherent European identification amongst supporters. The question is how has this affected the way fans act, represent and think about themselves? And, developing from this, what is its connection to the splintering of English national identification for supporters of clubs such as Liverpool?

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It appears that a loose form of European identification has developed amongst Liverpool fans around the forces of European competition and the narratives about such adventures that become embedded within Liverpool football club's fan folklore. This is especially the case on discursive sites such as Internet messageboards where glorious stories of European fan adventures and be told, retold and, possibly, embellished a little. However, it is indisputable that fan narratives about continental travels associated to football have been hugely positive. However, supporters' accounts often draw upon more than this frame, also encompassing an acknowledgement of the prestige, excitement and revenue of the Champions League. Together, these show different ways of interpreting (this proxy for) 'Europe' but together coherently produce pro-European competition fan narratives. Leonard (2002; 2005) has argued that much of *Europe's* strength has derived from the fact that it is not like nation-states in that it operates as an abstract *network* which impacts upon citizens' everyday experiences. This means that it is impossible to identify exactly *what* Europe is and *where* its power lies. The strength of this argument is that Europe is not like nation-states which have clearly identifiable compositions, which can be outwardly rejected. This has meant that whilst Liverpool fans *othered* England – in both football and non-football terms – this did not happen with an idea of Europe. However, this means that a strong nation-state-like identification could not be developed with Europe in which Liverpool fans would declare themselves to 'be European' in the way that either they did as 'scouse' or Oldham Athletic supporters did with reference to England. This is noted in the following exchange, during the 2004 golf Ryder Cup (which, as discussed in Chapter One is one of the few competitions to pit a *European* team against a United States team):

Liverpool fan (24): With all this Ryder Cup stuff, it reminds you how European we are, doesn't it?

Liverpool fan (25): No. And I'd keep that opinion quiet around here, we're not even English, nevermind European.

Liverpool fan (26): I'm wouldn't say I'm European but I'm supporting us because I hate the yanks.

(23rd September 2004)

Therefore, whilst Liverpool supporters are prepared to embrace a loose definition of Europe, in this instance they are not prepared to accept a discursive self-definition of the group as European. Although it is difficult to draw too many conclusions on the basis of one fan interaction, the argument can be made that this type of statement does not invalidate Liverpool fans' cultural relationship with a football based definition of Europe, but it does illustrate that this identification is weaker than their local identities and Oldham Athletic fans' local and national identities. So, what is the significance of the fissure of national identities/identifications?

There are three answers which come from the literature which help to answer this question. In chronological order, the first is offered by King (2000; 2003), which he calls the 'new localism', the second is offered by Giulianotti and Robertson (2004), and is referred to as the 'glocalisation' of football based identities, and third, Maguire (2005: 6) looks to the globalisation literature to suggest that transnational and local cultures in have sport have been intertwined through 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal' forces. In actual fact, all three theories are suggesting the same process, namely, that the transnational and local have become increasingly connected to produce a culture which, at times, simply *skips* the national dimension. However, there are problems applying any of these terms directly to this research due to the titles they have been given by their respective researchers. Beginning with King (2000; 2003), whilst his

assertion that European consciousnesses exist in a less coherent manner than local identities is truly applicable to this research, his use of the word 'new' cannot be wholly applied. There are two reasons for this rationale. First, this research is not longitudinal and so changes across time cannot hold any degree of validity, which means that it would be methodologically problematic to term a movement 'new'. Second, by looking at the remedial anti-national identification frames, it is suspected that initial fractures in Liverpool fans' national identities began before 1981 (Toxteth riots/uprisings) which would stretch any claims to be *recent*. The problem with the glocalisation title given by Giulianotti and Robertson (2004) is that this chapter shows how local and European identifications are compatible, not global and local, as described by the two co-authors. In the case of this research, a better title might be *Eulocalisation* which stresses the interconnections between the European and the local. However, this term is also rejected because it carries connotations of a Europe defined by the EU (*Eu*), which as outlined in Chapter One, occasionally gives a misleading impression of Europe. Third, Maguire (2005) describes the process of the blending of the local and transnational but unlike King (2000; 2003) or Giulianotti and Robertson (2004), does not title his theory. This is not a perfect conceptualisation but is understandable because of the elusiveness of the process. In this research the interconnection of local and European transnational cultures will be referred to as the *Super Club Network*. This will be further elaborated in Chapter Six.

Overall, the results show that the development of Liverpool supporters' European identifications has been through club-based or local interests. In this chapter, the most coherent Liverpool identities are those as 'scousers' or, at least, Liverpool supporters. Beyond these cultures, a sense of Europeanisation is building through a Europe which

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is experienced through local fan interests. This 'Europe' is not abstract, but is actually very real in Liverpool supporters' practices: Europe, to them (in this cultural situation), means fan-hedonism, club prestige and increased club revenues. In short, Liverpool fans have begun to Europeanise through locally situated interests which are perceived to be experienced first hand. Therefore, having demonstrated how Liverpool supporters tell positive stories about the 'Europe' which is principally defined through trans-continental football competition, considered how this may relate to some level of identification and thought about how this might relate to dominant local interests, the questions which will be explored in the next two results chapters are, first, whether such identifications are transferable to the football transfer/labour market and if this is combating intra-European xenophobia (Chapter Four) and, second, the extent to which a European political consciousness has developed for both groups of supporters (Chapter Five).

Chapter Four

'BLOODY FOREIGNERS!': XENOPHOBIA IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins to test the patterns of identifications which appeared in Chapter Three by considering whether the results remain consistent when supporters give opinions about football players and managers. This chapter represents a second category in European identification research by considering the extent to which intra-European xenophobic and cosmopolitan values exist (see Chapter One). Therefore, this chapter specifically concentrates on the relational dimension of identification (see Chapter Two).

There are three broad potential impacts that non-British football icons have on fan culture. First, the acceptance of *foreign* heroes may be having a cosmopolitan effect on identifications as non-national players are seen as *one of us*. Second, such players may be rejected as a result of wider social prejudices against *foreigners*, or third, the presence of non-national players may be making football fans increasingly xenophobic by cementing stereotypes about *others*. The chapter contributes to the book by questioning which of these impacts most accurately applies to Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters. If the first option is true, the post-Bosman transnational club teams will have at least reduced intra-European football based xenophobia, if not societal prejudices. In order to test this, there are two key parts to this chapter. In the first section, I detail *how* xenophobic opinions may be formed by investigating fan

comments using Rydgren's framed discourse analysis method. It must be immediately stated that this was extremely difficult to carry out, given that there may be many differences between players, irrespective of nationality and it is entirely possible that some players were singled out for criticism by fans for legitimate reasons (for instance, some non-British players simply are not good enough). There are three potential ways around this. First, is not to engage in such research for fear of reducing all values to nationality; second, is to carry out the research but only include evidence if it contains an ad joiner to nationality (i.e. 'lazy Spaniard' etc.). This would both massively reduce the evidence on offer and miss many 'hidden' racist values which become a defining feature of xenophobia; third, to count all applications of the frames by following an assumption that the reoccurrence of such frames has xenophobic sentiments embedded within them. This chapter cautiously assumes the third position. The diffuse and 'everyday' notion of xenophobia is a very difficult, but nevertheless important, attitude to capture. There have been numerous attempts to empirically tackle at the prevalence of xenophobia in the sociology of sport (some of the most impressive being Fleming and Tomlinson 1996; Back *et al.* 2001) but none have completely succeeded. It is not my intention to claim that I have filled this research void, but by re-appropriating Rydgren's analysis into the context of sport, this chapter follows the third option and presents one, albeit imperfect, way of tackling xenophobia. On the other hand, if European players (irrespective of nationality) are framed equally favourably (even if this is at the expense of non-European players), it can be argued with empirical evidence that a level of European cosmopolitanism, or viewed another way, an identification with European people (as football players) exists. The second part of the chapter builds upon this by demonstrating the aggregations of the xenophobic comments to look at the temporal

spread of such discourse over the sample period and question whether there are particular *conditions* under which prejudices become more prevalent.

FRAMING XENOPHOBIA

Before beginning to detail the results of this chapter, it must be recognised that xenophobia is a multi-levelled prejudice which exists in various strengths. In some cases, xenophobia is an extreme prejudice which may result in physical attack. For instance, the word could possibly conjure up images of anti-Semitic attacks across Europe (see Postone 1980) or other forms of abhorrent behaviour acted out against subjectively defined 'others' (Jones 2006). In the context of football, more intense forms of xenophobia have been reported in the writings of a number of sociologists. For instance, Garland and Rowe (2001) have argued that there are strong links between football hooligans and the political far-Right. This claim is substantiated by Merkel's (1997) research which suggests that the Heysel disaster provided an opportunity for Italian and English neo-Nazi groups to develop a trans-European network of extreme right groups. Elsewhere, Williams *et al.*'s (1992 [1984]) study of England fans in the 1982 FIFA World Cup demonstrated the extent of xenophobic actions when football fans travel 'abroad'.

It is uncontroversial to argue that to be seen to be xenophobic is an indictment of character and Horak and Marschik (1997) demonstrate how more extreme prejudices are sometimes hidden in Austrian professional football. For instance, in their overtly recorded fieldwork interviews, an Austrian club manager had spoke of his transnational team as 'one big family' but once the tape recorder had been switched off, he proudly declared that he had 'knocked the foreigners into shape' for fear 'they

would take over the club' (1997: 49-50). In Germany, where the everyday societal image of xenophobia conjures up prejudice against Turks and Eastern Europeans (Kurthen *et al.* 1997), some foreign players have been consistently verbally attacked through abusive terrace chants (Merkel *et al.* 1997: 156).⁵⁵

At the other end of the scale, xenophobia can be considered to be a non-extreme discrimination that is prevalent in everyday discourses and practices (see Gotsbachner 2001). In this case, xenophobic reactions may exist as a series of throwaway prejudices. Research into this form of discrimination is less common and often dismissed as 'commonsense' rather than inherently prejudiced. In the context of football, the only studies in this area conjecture that the potential mildly xenophobic 'jokes' about 'foreigners' given in the media may resonate within supporter cultures (see for instance, Garland and Rowe 1999 and Maguire *et al.* 1999). This chapter's research is explicitly concerned with fan discourse which is more likely to exist at the non-extreme level. It is not my intention to suggest that fans are hardened xenophobes or even to push forward ways of remedying such attitudes, but rather to show possible cultural contestations of European peoplehood within football.

Haynes (1995) asks for caution when using fanzines as a data source, because while he recognises that most contemporary football fanzines have a liberal voice, there are a minority which have explicitly fascist leanings. Therefore, if one of the featured e-zines were to show racist dispositions, the results of this chapter would hold little validity. As a pilot study, debate concerning former *ITV Sport* commentator, Ron Atkinson's alleged racist comments were examined. During the post match discussion

⁵⁵ Merkel *et al.* (1997: 156) argue that Polish, Colombian, Brazilian, French, Nigerian and Turkish players are particularly likely to be denigrated in this way.

of the Champions League tie between Chelsea and Monaco (20th April 2004), Atkinson referred to Chelsea's French defender, Marcel Desailly, as a 'fucking lazy, thick nigger'. In the aftermath, he pleaded innocence to the accusation of racism by arguing he did not intend to cause any offence. In his defence, two black ex-players, Brendon Bateson and Carlton Palmer, argued that their former manager was not 'racist'. Indeed in December 2004, an entire *BBC* documentary considered whether Atkinson was inherently racist. Both the action and follow up programme prompted debate on *JKL* and *RAOTL Online*. The results are in Table 4.01.

Whether Atkinson was acting in a racist manner is not of direct concern. Rather, the purpose of this exercise was to consider whether Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters share the same views on, and degrees of, racial prejudice.⁵⁶ Indeed, the quantitative results from the supporters' frames showed that the groups' interpretations of Atkinson's discourse were loosely similar.⁵⁷ Therefore, it is reasonable to consider that both groups of fans showed similar levels of prejudice.

Yet, the difficulties which the group experienced in forming a coherent opinion about Atkinson's discourse highlights the difficulties associated to distinguishing which negative comments were prejudiced, as distinct from those due to legitimate qualities. Indeed, Delanty and O'Mahony (2002: 148) and Rydgren (2003; 2004) argue that many of the ERP/RRP political movements (such as the BNP) overtly deny a racist

⁵⁶ However, if this were considered, Essed's (1991) argument that Atkinson's discursive practice was racially embedded into 'everyday' attitudes and should therefore be considered as part of 'everyday racism' would be fruitful. This is markedly different from BNP views as it does not contain a prognostic frame, such as, in the repatriation sense, removing all black people from the UK, but it nevertheless contains discriminatory undertones.

⁵⁷ These results give a vague indication of propensity to discrimination, but offer little certainty, as other variables such as how the group previously felt about Ron Atkinson and Marcel Desailly are not known.

component to their motivations and policies, claiming that their opposition to immigrants is social rather than cultural or biological. In short, Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000) argue that to be seen as racist and/or xenophobic is an indictment of character which inevitably carries a heavy stigma. This makes this chapter more contentious than Chapter Three: in everyday interaction it is less likely to be damaging for researchers to define *everyday people* as identifying with an idea of a particular space than it is to argue that they are xenophobic. Therefore, regular football fans would be uncomfortable in being labelled a *xenophobe*, even if they do communicate mildly xenophobic sentiments. Hence, a suitable framing method needs to delve deeper than the methods in Chapters Three and Five and be more similar to a discourse analysis approach, yet, without losing any quantitative underpinning. Rydgren (2003; 2004) provides a framework to do this, by breaking xenophobic discourse into six diagnostic frames. These frames are also found in the discourse football fans use to describe the performances of football players and are: illegitimate ethno-difference; ethno-pluralism; conflict; welfare-chauvinism; illegitimate competition, and, economic drain. Rydgren's seventh frame – criminality – was not transferred because football players were usually not seen to break criminal laws.⁵⁸ All frames can be given in the adversarial and remedial forms, therefore as a form of attack and defence. These frames were originally produced by football fans but they resonate from the influential figures in sport, politics or other forms of popular culture.

⁵⁸ There was a case for exploring the transference of this frame into breaking football rules – i.e. comments about foul play – however, this was rejected as it was decided that the central claims of this frame, namely that 'foreign' players innate differences leads to foul play, is dissolved within the 'illegitimate ethno-difference' frame.

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Frames were represented in two ways. First, criticisms/counter criticisms of each territorially defined group of players were given as a percentage of the total number of criticisms/counter criticisms in that frame. This is the case with both those who pose the *threat* and those who are *threatened* (x , defining the group who provide *threat* or y , defining the group who are *threatened*). The second criterion looked at the average number of criticisms/counter criticisms each group received, per player. There were four player groups: local, non-local English/British, non-British European and non-European players.

Local players were those who were either from the county in which the club is located (for instance with Liverpool, all players born in Merseyside, whilst with Oldham Athletic, all players originating from Greater Manchester) or those who graduated from the respective teams youth set-ups. It is recognised that this label would become problematic if applied to clubs like Arsenal or Manchester United, who have brought young players from other nations into their youth teams/academies but this was not the case with either Liverpool or Oldham Athletic in 2003/4 and 2004/5. The choice was made to slice the categories thinner than a simple distinction between 'nationals' and 'non-nationals' (which was Rydgren's level of separation) because Gellner (1995a) and Jones (2006) have both pointed out that xenophobic attitudes may be distinguished within, as well as between, nations. It was decided that the methodology should reflect this distinction, so the second category described non-local English/British players. Third, since what is ultimately being described is the possible existence of European identifications, it was felt that a division between non-national Europeans and non-Europeans should be made. Therefore, the third category referred to non-national European players. In Chapter One it was recognised

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that there are multiple definitions of Europe but for the purpose of this chapter, *Europe* was defined according to the 'school history book' because this was likely to be the consensual understanding amongst football fans. This means that *Europe* does not include Turkey or Russia, but does include non-EU states, Norway, Switzerland and Iceland. The fourth category referred to players of non-European origin.

Looking at the average number of criticisms/counter criticisms per player was useful because it showed the impact of current *foreign* players upon fan identifications. Yet, it is important to recognise that football based fan identifications are the result of more than the existing playing staff. Indeed, narratives and imagined collective memories of past players also play significant roles in the development of group identifications. Unfortunately, the impact of collective memories could not be quantitatively calibrated by a single formula. Hence, there was also a need to look at the percentage of criticisms/counter-criticisms particular to each territorially defined group, which gave a holistic representation of comments. It is worth noting that because both 'we' and 'they' can simultaneously exist on many levels (for instance 'we' can be both local and British, as distinct from 'they' Europeans) the total sums of x and y were not necessarily equal. The way in which Rydgren's frames were used by Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans will now be considered.

'ILLEGITIMATE ETHNO-DIFFERENCE' FRAME

Rydgren (2004) argues that the frame which runs closest to pre-World War II racism is 'illegitimate ethno-difference'. This shares similar sentiments with Smith's (1992; 1995) interpretation of 'eastern' nationalism, in that it supposes that national identities are based upon ethnic blood ties and are intrinsically distinct. When ERP/RRP use

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this frame, they are giving the message that 'immigrants are biologically different and/or have inherently different temperaments than national citizens'. This frame was transferred to the context of the football transfer market as 'x players (local, English/British, non-national European or non-European) are biologically different and/or have innate character attributes or temperaments than y players' (local, English/British, non-national European or non-European).

From Table 4.02 it is clear that the two sets of supporters used this frame to different extents and define who the 'they' threatening (x) and the threatened 'we' (y) group differently. Oldham Athletic fans most commonly used the frame to confer English national identification against European 'others', whereas Liverpool supporters drew upon this less often and were more likely to show how local players were innately superior to all other players. Oldham Athletic fan (4) articulated a way in which his supporter group typically drew on the frame, shortly after England's 2-1 defeat by France in the Euro2004 Championships:

I've got to admit, I'm almost bloody suicidal after the result. We outplayed them for 85 mins, and we still lost. I guess that's the problem with being English and playing it fair.

Oldham Athletic fan (4) (14th June 2004)

This comment was disputed by a relatively small group of Oldham Athletic supporters (see Table 4.03), who, perhaps sub-consciously, recognised the embedded ERP/RRP opinion by arguing against the use of such discourse. Nevertheless the allusion to illegitimate ethno-differences based around the conflation of race and nationhood was evident in many Oldham Athletic supporter comments throughout the sample.

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On the other hand, Liverpool supporters typically used this frame less often and in a different way. One of the key arguments which emerged in Chapter Three was that Liverpool fans did not generally identify with an *idea* of Englishness in the way that their Oldham Athletic counterparts did. As a consequence, the 'we group' principally referred to strong locally born players. This was reflected in the example by fan (27) which showed that Liverpool supporters saw local-born/former youth team players possessing different character traits than 'outsiders':

The point about the local lads having heart is a very valid one. All the ability in the world is nothing without desire. Look at H*skey.

Liverpool fan (27) (27th May, 2004)

Liverpool fan (27) communicated a similar sentiment to Oldham Athletic fan (4), namely that the group they identified with has positive characteristics when compared to outsiders. In this case, Liverpool fan (27) saw 'local lads' as having 'heart'. He took this to be an essential 'battling' aptitude which was lacking in non-local players. As a counter point, he principally blamed Emile Heskey, a Leicester born (black) centre forward, for lacking this aptitude. Indeed, even when the idea of 'Liverpudlians' being innately different to 'others' was remedially framed, examples were tinged with a nostalgic sadness that Liverpool born players had become rationalised by external market forces. An example of this was when, in the summer of 2004, the media widely reported that Huyton-raised club captain, Steven Gerrard was to leave Liverpool to join Chelsea who had been bought by the Russian billionaire, Roman Abramovich. When speaking about the issue Liverpool fan (28) typically suggested:

If Gerrard goes, it shows that our lads are just the same as anybody else. Nobody, especially a scouser, should leave Liverpool cos THEY want to. Could you imagine Tommy Smith [former Liverpool born captain] doing

it? Where's the pride of the liver bird, Shankly, Paisley and tragedy?
Wheres the scouse loyalty gone, chasing the rouble???

Liverpool fan (28) (12th June 2004)

It is clear that Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans may both falsely stress innate in-group and out-group differences (which inevitably favour the former). However, the conditions which gave rise to this reaction, such as club and international tournaments, differed with Liverpool fans more likely to stress the former and their Oldham Athletic counterparts, the latter. The frequency of the frame use varied between clubs with Oldham Athletic supporters much more likely to criticise *others* using this discourse. The next frame will consider 'ethno-plural' differences.

'ETHNO-PLURALIST' FRAME

Rydgren (2004) identifies a second major ERP/RRP ideological tool as the 'ethno-pluralist' frame. This gives the argument that 'mixing different ethnicities leads to cultural extinction and unique national cultures will disappear as a result of immigration'. Hence, for Triandafyllidou (2001) the frame presumes purity of national cultures, which have to be protected from the intrusions of *foreigners*. As the frame is moved to the football labour market, it is modified to argue that 'employing x players will lead to a loss of y cultural distinctiveness'. Unsurprisingly, given the European/transnational club space that Liverpool occupies (competition, transfer market etc), Tables 4.04-4.05 show that although this frame was not heavily used, its fans drew upon it more than Oldham Athletic supporters. Indeed, Table 4.04 shows how Liverpool supporters were equally likely to see their unique (y) culture as being either 'scouse' or English/British. They saw these cultures as threatened (x) by either non-British Europeans (60 per cent likelihood) or non-Europeans (40 per cent

probability). In most cases, there was a need to protect (sub)-national cultures from *foreign* menace.

On average, Liverpool fans criticised each non-European player three times and each non-British European player 0.95 times. An example which articulated how Liverpool fans saw *foreigners* as a threat to the unique culture of English football is given by (29), who, whilst talking about the composition of a completely non-English Arsenal team argued:⁵⁹

What's the point of playing in North London or in the English league?
They might aswell change their name to Emirates Arsenal franchise
and relocate to Asia and get 200,000 crowds.
What is the point of playing in the English league?
Soon players will be flying in on match day-play a game and fly out..
What is the difference now between the likes of Chelsea or Arsenal-
just the name it seems... they have become just brand names. They
might aswell swap players every season so they can take turns winning
the league. Make it look competitive.

Liverpool fan (29) (15th February 2005)

Liverpool fan (29)'s comment was intended to protect local and national cultures by asking 'what's the point of [Arsenal's multinational team] playing in North London'? Liverpool fan (29) also used a second xenophobic frame - which Rydgren (2003; 2004) terms 'illegitimate competitors' - in the second paragraph of his comment. The overall meaning behind his communication was that English (and perhaps regional) football had a particular culture which *foreign* football players threaten. However, Liverpool fan (7) remedially responded to a similar use of the frame by arguing that

⁵⁹ The first choice Arsenal team of 2004/5 season included two London born, English players, Ashley Cole and Sol Campbell. However, on 14th February 2005, because both of these players were unavailable, none of Arsenal's first team in their 5-1 victory over London rivals, Crystal Palace, were British. Therefore, the team (and the 'state of' English football) were criticised in the English press.

the seemingly nostalgic notion of Liverpool players being entirely from Liverpool or England was fabricated:

The first ever Liverpool team contained hardly any English players. After the Everton first team players upped and offed [moved] to Goodison the Chairman, John Harding registered 'Liverpool' for the local league for the next season without having any players at all. He then took himself on a tour of Dublin, Belfast and Glasgow and signed any decent looking player he saw for the following season.

If you wanted to know

Liverpool fan (7) (16th February 2005)

The results from the frame illustrated that Liverpool fans were more likely to use it than Oldham Athletic supporters. This represents a different dimension of xenophobic discourse to the previous frame. Next, a third dimension, the 'conflict' frame, will be considered.

'CONFLICT' FRAME

Rydgren's (2003; 2004) third pattern of xenophobic discourse is the 'conflict' frame. This frame also draws upon ethnic distinctions with the message that 'peaceful and harmonious development is possible only if the nation is ethnically homogeneous'. The equivalent in football fan discourse was that 'a successful team can only be built/developed using y players' (local, English/British, non-national European or non-European). Although lacking sociological rigour, Tomkins (2005: 68-80) makes a clear argument that the British sports media (which includes many former Liverpool players, such as Alan Hansen, Mark Lawrenson and Ian St. John as television 'pundits' and/or newspaper columnists) often blame *foreign* players for a team's bad results. Tomkins (*ibid*: 74) critiques this idea by suggesting that 'whenever a top

team struggles, it's down to a lack of '*Englishness*'. It is an attitude stuck in the 1970s' (original author's emphasis). In the sociological context, Tomkins has criticised the British media for 'giving off' a conflict frame (c.f. Goffman 1959). Also, Tomkins claims that only 'top teams' are criticised in this way. The results presented in Tables 4.06-4.07 would suggest that Tomkins is correct as Liverpool fans made up 94.34 per cent of adversarial frames. The interpretation seemed to be that it was local players who were most threatened (66 per cent). Liverpool fan (6) illustrates how supporters typically drew upon this frame to favour local players over all 'others':

The point is, if you can't afford to shop at Harrods, then when in the Kwiky, stick to the local and homegrown sections, cos I'm in no doubt whatsoever they'd be better than various French and Spanish gutless wankers we've seen over the last few years.

It's not being wise after the event either. This sort of thing should be obvious, it's hardly rocket science.

Like I said, we can't afford to sign every big name in Europe the way Chelsea can, and to be honest, much as I'm keen to see this much vaunted investment finally arrive, I don't want it to be on the Abramovich scale. It's just not right, and I wouldn't want us to go down that artificial road which might win you trophies, but will never win you respect.

But we do still seem to be capable of signing one or two reasonably big names per season. If we surround them with the sort of players we've mentioned, we might actually start to see the sort of 100% commitment we used to take for granted return to the club.

And whatever we do or don't win, we can't really ask for more than that.

Liverpool fan (6) (7th March 2005)

Liverpool fan (6) is arguing that the highest quality *foreign* players were the most expensive and while he would have liked to have seen these players at Liverpool, he would rather Merseyside born players were bought if the best international stars cannot be purchased (i.e. 'Shop at Harrods'). To communicate this message, he stated that 'when in the Kwiky' (which refers to a chain of budget 'KwikSave'

supermarkets) 'stick to the homegrown and local sections' (local or youth team players). Rydgren (2003) argues that the ERP/RRP often draw upon existing schematas in order to frame their policies, which they subsequently describe as 'commonsense' and Liverpool fan (6) articulates how the ERP/RRP may experience success in this tactic, by suggesting that '[t]his sort of thing should be obvious, it's hardly rocket science'. He reinforced his point by offering a 'commonsense' reason for his opinion, in that these players offer '100% commitment' that fans 'used to take for granted'. By indicating that a greater number of local players will see the desire/'heart' (see 'illegitimate ethno-differences' section) return to the club, he nostalgically implied that the post-Bosman era has seen many such qualities 'lost'.

Once again, Liverpool supporters have dominated the frame. This pattern suggests that the opening up of a trans-European transfer market has made European super club fans' distance themselves from cosmopolitan attitudes. However, there are still other ways in which xenophobic discourse can be framed. The next is 'welfare-chauvinism'.

'WELFARE CHAUVINIST' FRAME

Rydgren (2003; 2004) argues that 'welfare-chauvinism' is the fourth frame that the ERP/RRP employs. This frame breaks from overt ethnic distinctions to argue that 'immigrants do not work as hard as nationals' (Rydgren 2004). In respect to football, the frame refers to how x players do not earn their wages as much as y players. Data in Tables 4.08-4.09 shows that Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans both regularly drew upon this discourse. Liverpool fans were most likely to see non-British Europeans (48.14 per cent) and non-Europeans (44.75 per cent) as not working as hard as local

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(42.44 per cent) and, paradoxically non-British European (51.08 per cent) players.

There appeared to be a pattern whereby the efforts of non-British European players unfavourably contrast to local players. Yet, non-British Europeans were likely to be favoured over non-European players. This pattern was also found when looking at the average number of criticisms each player received, with each non-European player accused of not working hard 66 times during the sample period. This was contrasted with local players who each had the same criticism levelled at them 0.86 times.

Liverpool fan (30) highlights how non-European players were imagined to be less hard working than their local colleagues:

If Houllier had given the academy players the chance 2 years ago then imagine how much better they would be now. They would certainly have done no worse, and worked harder than the 'cackers' like Diao, Cheyrou and Diomede, so in that essence we missed the boat.

As for them now, im a big fan of Warnocks. Something about him I really like - probably his attitude and work-rate, although he has lots of quality too.

Mellor I like too but not so sure if he will make it here.

Liverpool fan (30) (25th November 2004)

Liverpool fan (30) was communicating that Liverpool's academy (youth team) players should have been given preference over *foreign* players such as Salif Diao (Senegalese), Bruno Cheyrou (French) and Bernard Diomede (French) during the final period of Gerard Houllier's spell as Liverpool manager. He argues that they worked harder and 'earned' their wages more than some *foreigners*. Liverpool fan (30) reinforced these comments by arguing that he likes the former youth team player, Stephen Warnock 'probably [because of] his attitude and work-rate'. On the other hand, Liverpool fan (31) gave a second supporter pattern, namely that non-British European players work harder than non-European players:

Confidence my arse he's [Harry Kewell] just not pulling his weight and hasn't for 9 months imo. He needs to be dropped to give him the kick up the arse he richly deserves. Riise is a player with a 10th of Kewells talent but his heart and commitment are never in doubt. Look at Giggs the other night, same position, left wing but the work rate was miles apart from Kewells

Liverpool fan (31) (22nd November 2004)

Comments such as Liverpool fan (31)'s were common when the performances of Australian left-winger, Harry Kewell, were discussed. It was exceedingly rare that Kewell's talent would be questioned, yet he was consistently criticised for his perceived lack of effort. Often, this was in contrast to his main opponent for his first team place, Norwegian midfielder John Arne Riise, who was consequently praised for his ability to not tire (or gain injuries) during a football match. Interpreting this evidence is difficult; it is not explicitly clear whether the Liverpool fans were rejecting Kewell, accepting Riise or a combination of both. Indeed, Shore (1997: 258) argues that the exclusion of non-Europeans is a very real threat in an age of European integration. Therefore, despite Norwegian player Riise not being a citizen of the EU, Shore may argue that his notional acceptance was at the expense of Kewell. However, the frame results do not conclusively show that non-British Europeans were accepted beyond a status of the assimilated 'other'. Oldham Athletic supporter results are equally complicated given that data in Table 4.08 suggests a pattern that different players, irrespective of their nationality, can be equally framed as lazy or hard working. This may be because non-British players are not as common in the lower divisions as in the Premiership. This can be taken into account by looking at the number of criticisms each player is likely to receive and Table 4.08 shows that all *foreign* players are perceived to be less hard working than their British equivalents. It is not important whether *foreign* players are European or not.

However, it must be noted that by looking at Oldham Athletic fans' *y* values, *foreign* players are seen (albeit by a lesser margin) to work harder than other players. This apparent lack of preference of one group over another –manifest in both criticisms and counter criticisms- potentially provides the closest results to the cosmopolitanism which some have suggested emerges in the post-Bosman era. However, this has been created because foreign players are *unusual* in the English lower divisions. This point noted the next frame considered is that of 'illegitimate competitors'.

'ILLEGITIMATE COMPETITORS' FRAME

Rydgren's (2003; 2004) fifth frame is 'illegitimate competitors', which argues that 'immigrants are illegitimate competitors for other scarce resources, such as jobs'. In football, this frame is translated to mean that other/*x* players provide illegitimate competition to 'our' *y* players as they potentially take up places in the club's first team, therefore prohibiting the full development of *our* players. Earlier in the chapter, Liverpool fan (29) demonstrated an example of this frame at the end of a conflict frame, by arguing:

I'm telling you if all jobs in the UK were taken by cheaper foreign workers then you'll soon see restrictions on free labour in the EU...

Liverpool fan (29) (15th February 2005)

The frame has also been used by influential figures in football. For instance, FIFA President Sepp Blatter singled out Liverpool's non-English contingent for criticism because he perceived them to block English players' route into the first team:

FIFA's idea is that we [competing clubs] should have at least six players eligible for the national team of the country in which they [the competing clubs] play ... One of the principles of the European Union is the free assimilation of people ... You [competing clubs] can start

with as many players from other European countries as you see fit ... Not just with Liverpool but other clubs, say Bayern Munich, there are a maximum of one or two [national] players ... The national identity of clubs is very important.

Sepp Blatter (*Soccer Investor*, 12th December 2005).

If the media principally help to develop the 'conflict frame' (and to a lesser extent the 'ethno-plural frame') the above comments suggest that figures of genuine authority foster this discourse. Therefore, international tournaments, such as Euro2004, (which, as argued in Chapter Three are potentially of interest to small club fans) largely fuel claims to 'illegitimate ethno-difference', while big-club issues are more likely to prompt 'ethno-plural' and 'conflict' discourse, this frame finds resonance with both club fans. Liverpool supporters most commonly view non-national European players (75.75 per cent) blocking local born/youth team players' (64.21 per cent) paths into the first team. This point is typically articulated by Liverpool fans (27) and (32) (on 10th April 2004):

Liverpool fan (32):

This is a question really and changing the subject a lot but I was watching the Lyon V Porto CL game and was quite impressed with Lyon number seven Alou Diarra is that the Liverpool player who I thought was on loan at Bastia. In the fansine I had read he was a pile of pooh but the land of his birth overcame a lack of talent. Is he the same player? Eurosport are playing all the CL games over the weekend.

Liverpool fan (27):

No, it's not the same player. Our one is on loan at Bastia, and from what I've heard is a pile of poo. Put it this way, if he was any good he'd be here instead of the likes of Diaio.

Let him stay in France. The last thing we need is another shite French midfield player blocking John Welsh's path.

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In context, Liverpool fan (32) asked the members of the e-zine community if the Alou Diarra he has seen playing for French club Lyon in the Champions League is the same player who is actually loaned out by Liverpool to the French club Bastia. Liverpool fan (27) replied that the two players were not the same and that Liverpool's employee was 'another shite French midfield player blocking' youth team star 'John Welsh's path' into the first team. Indeed, throughout the sample period Liverpool fans regularly spoke about how John Welsh should be considered as a first team player above 'illegitimate competitors' from 'abroad'. Additionally, Liverpool fan (27) hints at a 'prognostic frame' (Rydgren 2003; 2004) - which suggests a subjectively desirable outcome – as the repatriation of 'shite French midfielders'. Despite the Liverpool supporter's feelings, Welsh continued to play only a very minor first team role in Benitez's first season in charge and was permanently transferred to English second tier club, Hull City, in January 2006. Whether Welsh's options were actually limited by non-British midfield players or whether he simply was not of the required playing quality remains to be seen. However the fact that two highly respected managers, Gerard Houllier and Rafael Benitez, declined to play him and once available for transfer, no other Premiership clubs were interested, suggests the latter. Incidentally, the career of the 'shite French midfielder' Alou Diarra unfolded differently as he eventually played for France in the 2006 FIFA World Cup final.

Despite the different interests which prompted the 'illegitimate competitor' frame (Liverpool fans were more interested in their club's success and Blatter with the 'health' of the game at the global level) the encoded message is the same, namely that *foreign* players are blocking *y* (in this case local or national) young players' access to the first team. Different results were generated when the mean number of criticisms

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each player received was examined. In this event, the *x* threat is often defined as *foreign* players, but the *y* threatened group overwhelmingly refers to English/British players. Hence, if the large number of local players (in relation to the small number of other British players) was factored into the results, a misleading impression may be gained as other results suggest that Liverpool fans probably do not care about other British players in the way that they do locally born equivalents (see earlier frames and Chapter Three).

Oldham Athletic supporters consistently reported a preference for British players over corresponding *foreigners*. However, the circumstance under which this becomes obvious is different. For instance, when arguing from the point of view of the English national team, Oldham Athletic supporters, such as (12) suggest that the number of non-English foreign players in the Premiership is a disadvantage. Under a communication which he had titled 'The Problem with English Football' after England's defeat to Portugal in Euro2004, he argued:

The main problem with English Football is the lack of home grown talent. The top clubs are not nurturing the stars of tomorrow, instead relying on 35 year old Johnny Foreigner as a stop gap for a year, while Johnny earns £30k per week.

Hang on, say you all, what about Rooney? Surely proof of young English talent? Absolutely. But ask yourselves this- would Rooney get in Chelsea's 1st 11? Yes you say! BUT- if Rooney had STARTED at the Bridge, would he have cracked their 1st team at 18? No. No way would Ranieri/Mourinho gamble on an untried 18 year old English kid, when there's Hasslebaink/A.N. Other in front of him. We've only seen Rooney for England at 18 because he plays for Everton, and they need to try anything that works to win games!

The Sven argument (not tuned in to English motivation). There may be a case for this, but how many SUCCESSFUL English managers are currently managing in our Premier League? Erm.....

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How can we say Allardyce/ Curbishley should get the top job? Done well at their respective clubs, but trophies won? None worth mentioning.

English football desperately needs a cap on the number of foreign players in each squad. Where's the next Seaman/Shilton/James (???) coming from? Won't be any of the top sides at the moment. What about strikers? LEFT SIDED MIDFIELDERS!! English talent is not getting it's chance at the top level of our domestic league, and then people wonder why the national team has a shortage of top line talent.

Seems obvious to me.

Oldham Athletic fan (12) (25th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (12) was arguing that Premiership clubs are relying upon 'stop gap ... Johnny Foreigners' rather than nurturing young, talented, English football players. It is worth noting that this opinion is very similar to those of Liverpool fan (27) and Blatter. Much like Liverpool fan (6)'s 'should be obvious' comment, Oldham Athletic fan (12) also showed how the ERP/RRP may draw upon existing schemata by describing their similar policies as 'commonsense' (Rydgren 2003). Also, Oldham Athletic fan (12) used a prognostic 'resistance' frame, namely that migration through the international transfer market should cease. Therefore, in the context of the English national team, Oldham Athletic fans were opposed to the effects of the international transfer market. In the club context, the data in Table 4.10 implies a tendency to echo this attitude. Yet, Table 4.11 shows that this is also occasionally disputed. Oldham Athletic fan (13) first showed how this message is affirmed:

I think that part of the problem is the huge influx of EC players into the Premeier League. Historically, we always managed to find and persuade an older class act to spend 2 years at the end of their careers at BP.

Today, most class acts are foreigners and they choose to leave with their chests of gold after a 3 year contract. Decent prem players have

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also made their coin and do not fancy 2 hard years of slog. So we have lost a ready supply of players and are left with other teams chuck-outs.

Oldham Athletic fan (13) (8th November 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (13) demonstrated how the maturation of the European transfer market has meant that 'older class' players are now from overseas parts of Europe and once they have passed the peak of their careers, they move back to their home countries. This marked a difference from previous eras, when older, high quality players were almost universally British (and Irish) and saw out their career twilight years in the lower English leagues. This meant that Oldham Athletic fan (13)'s perception was that the quality of play in the lower divisions has subsequently declined. This was a typical discourse amongst Oldham Athletic fans, yet the data in Table 4.11 also points out that there is a contrary view on this matter, which Oldham Athletic fan (14) points out:

I just can't accept that on average the division is worse now than it was; yes, there have been examples of good sides in the last few years in this league, and perhaps there isn't one obviously good side, other than Luton this season.

But given the Premiership keeps getting better with more talented players being imported from abroad, it means the better English players are displaced to "the Championship", and so the Championship players are displaced lower. Nick Barmby is playing in this division now is for me a great example, and Jason McAteer. Yes they could both be Cleggs, but the fact is players with proven class are playing at this level.

Oldham Athletic fan (14) (7th November 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (14) is voicing the opinion that the international transfer market has meant that the playing standards in the Premiership have improved. The market effect meant that good quality English players (such as Nick Barmby) have been displaced into the lower divisions. Therefore, the lower divisions have benefited from

the surplus of talent. This meant that the overall playing quality of the lower leagues has improved.

This frame represents one way in which both sets of fans expressed xenophobic opinion. However, there were key qualitative differences in the situations where this frame was mobilised. Consistent with the results of Chapter Three, Liverpool supporters are not generally concerned with the success of the English national team. The frame was not used to defend such team's failings in the way that Oldham Athletic supporters have generally done so. On a club level, however the maturation of the international transfer market gives rise to prejudiced reactions from Liverpool fans, who are mainly worried that the access routes of local born players are being blocked by sub-standard non-British European players. On the other hand, Oldham Athletic fans do not often see their team directly affected by the European transfer market, so the cultural implications are smaller. The consensus of opinion amongst Oldham Athletic fans was that the increasing number of non-British players reduced the number of high quality, ageing professionals who were prepared to play in the lower divisions; as such players tended to be *foreign* and return to their home country in the final years of their career. Yet, there was a minority opinion which embraced the new trend, by arguing that the new market had seen higher quality British players displaced from the Premiership and into the lower leagues. The last body of opinion aside, given respective threats, both sets of supporters displayed a willingness to provide adversarial 'illegitimate competitors' frames. The next section will follow this up by looking at the sixth and final xenophobic frame Rydgren (2003; 2004) outlines, namely that of 'economic drain'.

'ECONOMIC DRAIN' FRAME

The sixth frame refers to an 'economic drain'. In the wider society, the frame is used to communicate that inflation, unemployment and diminishing social rewards in the context of recession are caused by inward migration. This means that 'migrants' are seen to be draining scarce economic resources from national citizens. Habermas (1991) calls this argument 'welfare nationalism'. Rydgren (2004) described the frame as the belief that 'immigrants drain the country of resources that could have been used for better (or maintained) welfare for natives'. The football labour (transfer) market is different to issues in the wider society given that it is never argued that migrant football players are draining national resources from 'the state' because they are often highly paid professionals. However, the essence of this frame does translate into the football labour market with the argument that 'x players have drained football clubs of their economic resources'. Therefore this re-appropriation shifts the object that can be drained from the state to a private organisation. However, Michie (2003) argues that although most professional clubs are business-led organisations, football fans feel as if they 'own' their football club which they support (in a way that they would not with other private sector companies). Thus, a supporter's relationship with his/her football club can be interpreted to be similar to a citizen with his/her state; hence the translation of this frame into the specific context can be made. An example of this frame is highlighted in Oldham Athletic fan (13)'s comment that '[t]oday, most class acts are foreigners and they choose to leave with their chests of gold after a 3 year contract', whilst Liverpool fan (33) echoed a similar comment:

Diao is fucking shite, & should not be playing in a Liverpool shirt.
His distribution is shite, he runs around chasing the ball like a fucking
dog after hub caps, he's crap. A total waste of money

It blows my fucking mind to think of the money we have wasted on shite players. Traore, Riise and Josemi none of them good enough and all earning good wages.

Liverpool fan (33) (12th December 2004)

Like all frames, the danger here has to be whether players have been artificially grouped together as non-British or whether some Liverpool fans (such as 33) are sub-consciously doing this. If the analysis is accurate, the common message was that some *foreign* players were perceived to be draining away football clubs' financial resources. This was despite the fact that many British Premiership managers/coaches who have limited player recruitment budgets have turned away from the inflated British transfer market to find *foreign* alternatives. The reason which is often given is that they find better value *abroad*. Yet, this enduring pattern has been overlooked by voices within both fan groups to articulate a discourse which fits the assumptions of Rydgren's 'economic drain' frame. Oldham Athletic supporters have more frequently used the frame than their Liverpool counterparts, accounting for 65.17 per cent of adversarial frame, and 86 per cent of remedial frame comments. Many Oldham Athletic supporters saw non-British European (39.66 per cent) and non-European football players (32.76 per cent) as a source of lost income. Liverpool fans were less likely to draw upon this frame, which is unsurprising given that Champions League qualification and Premiership television revenues meant that Liverpool were far less likely to be troubled by the threat of bankruptcy. However, when Liverpool fans drew upon this frame, they were overwhelmingly likely to argue that non-national European players have cost the club. This is unsurprising, given that in the aftermath of Liverpool's AGM 2004, *The Liverpool Echo* (5th November 2004) held the departure of former manager, Gerard Houllier and many of his non-British European players as accountable for £10.7m of the club's £15.8m debt (see Chapter Three).

LIBERAL FRAME

Finally, a liberal frame has been introduced. This frame is not part of Rydgren's analysis but explains that the football labour market is open to all players but some lack the necessary skills and athleticism. Hence, low quality players may be criticised, irrespective of their nationality. This meant that the liberal frame is not automatically filled with xenophobic comments although they may have been built from patterns of liberal speech (for instance, the fact that a non-British European player is not perceived to be a sufficiently high quality player may lead to a 'illegitimate competitors' frame, which communicates that the given player is blocking a local player's path to the first team). Data in Table 4.14 shows that Liverpool fans were overwhelmingly most likely to liberally frame non-British European or non-local British players in this negative way, while Oldham Athletic supporters were most likely to refer to local and British players as 'not good enough'.

RANKING FRAMES

The chapter results have illustrated the ways in which Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters used six of Rydgren's frames, plus the liberal frame which I have inserted. These results have suggested that different issues (Liverpool, big-club matters typified by a participation in a transnational European space and Oldham Athletic, smaller club-based concerns but a greater emphasis on the well-being of the English national team) have prompted xenophobic discourse. This tends to be only mildly prejudiced, but none-the-less discriminate against *outsiders*. However, the chapter results have not yet told us which spatially defined player groups are most enduringly viewed as

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the *threat* (x) and the *threatened* (y). This will now be explored by aggregating the overall quantitative scores.

Given that there were two criteria for judging who were the x and y groups in each of the chapter frames (first, the number of criticisms/counter criticisms each player group received, as a percentage of all criticisms/counter criticisms and second, the number of criticisms/counter criticisms players in each group were likely to receive over the sample period) the same methods will be used in this sub-section. To do this, each player category in Rydgren's six frames has been ranked (the liberal frame has been omitted as there were no real ground to argue that comments within this frame were prejudiced) and aggregated the results. Therefore, this data is ordinal, which means that each frame has an equal 'weight'.

Data is treated as ordinal, rather than interval/ratio (which is data that is measured on a continuous scale) because simply aggregating the percentages or the number of criticisms/counter criticisms rather than ranked positions could mean that the impact of less frequently used frames may be diminished. This would not be beneficial because all frames are potentially important, irrespective of the frequency of their use. To produce the ranked scores, data in Tables 4.02-4.13 was graded, with the smallest x and y number producing the highest rank (i.e. 1). This was aggregated according to affirmative (criticisms) and remedial (counter criticisms) variants, meaning that eight tables were produced (each supporter group had two which represent x and two which represent y). These are found in Tables 4.16-4.23 and will now be explained.

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Table 4.16 shows the aggregate ranks of the categories Oldham Athletic fans perceived to be *y* (*us/threatened*) group (according to the number of criticisms/counter criticisms each group encountered as a percentage of the overall player criticisms/counter criticisms). The results of this test showed that British players, followed by local players were defined most enduringly as at the *y* group. The second test of *y* status (see Table 4.20, defined by the number of criticisms/counter criticisms that players in each territorially defined group, on average, received during the fourteen month period) also shows that British players were defined as the in-group. Data in Table 4.18 (according to the 'number of criticisms/ counter criticisms each group encountered as a percentage of the overall player criticisms/counter criticisms' test) showed that non-European players were most commonly defined as the *x* group. According to the second test (see Table 4.22), non-British European players were viewed as the most enduring out-group. This meant that Oldham Athletic supporters generally saw *foreigners* (European or non-European) as the *threat* to 'their' players, which were most obviously English/British (although not necessarily local-born/youth team graduates).

Data in Table 4.17 shows that local players were consistently framed as the *y* (*us/threatened*) group by Liverpool supporters, according to the number of criticisms/counter criticisms each group encountered as a percentage of the overall player criticisms/counter criticisms test. On the other hand, the second test (as the number of criticisms/counter criticisms that players in each territorially defined group, on average, received during the fourteen month period) shows English/British players as the enduring in-group (see Table 4.21). Results found in Table 4.19 show that Liverpool supporters saw non-British European players as 'others' (according to the

number of criticisms/ counter criticisms each group encountered as a percentage of the overall player criticisms/counter criticisms test). Whereas data in Table 4.23 shows that (according to the 'number of criticisms/counter criticisms that players in each territorially defined group, on average, received during the fourteen month period) non-European players were defined as the out-group. Overall, the two aggregated sets of results are similar in that *foreigners* are viewed as threats to British players.

The overall section results show that 'xenophobic' frames have been used by both Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans to protect *their* interests. The difference lies in the focus of interests. To elaborate, in Chapter Three, it was noted that many Liverpool fans displayed strong local identifications which were defined in opposition to *Englishness*. This attitude resonates with the values of Liverpool supporters in this chapter, who showed a strong desire to protect local players from the effects of the national and transnational transfer markets. Therefore, given a choice between local and non-local players, Liverpool fans would choose the former. However, the subliminal strength of wider British social forces seems to be impacting upon identifications, with Liverpool fans choosing British players over *foreign* alternatives. This suggests that the weak European identification in the last chapter was either not coherent enough to be manifest in these results or showed that identifications cannot be automatically assumed to transfer across particular contexts. The same issue is at play when the possibility of global identifications is raised: non-national players are merely seen to be *foreign* – irrespective of European citizenship - and British (but

particularly local) alternatives are preferred.⁶⁰ Oldham Athletic supporter attitudes were even clearer. Consistent with the results of Chapter Three, they tended to display strong national identifications but did not articulate a need to protect local players. Therefore, to originate from Greater Manchester was to be *English* in the same way as hailing from anywhere else in the UK. The next section will consider whether these patterns were consistent over the full fourteen month sample period.

CONVENIENT COSMOPOLITANISM?

Essed (1991) and Triandafllidou (2001) have both shown that prejudice and discrimination are related to the power structure of society and serve to maintain the privilege of one group over another. In the context of football, King (1995) showed how this might be true by looking at the case of French former football player, Eric Cantona. He found that xenophobic discourse was used to denigrate Cantona once he left Leeds United to transfer to rivals Manchester United (in 1992).⁶¹ This can be read as a typical xenophobic reaction, in that Cantona was for the first time *threatening* Leeds United and that threat produces xenophobic anxieties. Beyond the value of the discussed frames, this illustrates the convenient nature of acceptance of 'others'. A way of deciphering this is to look at the temporal distribution of all critical comments over the fourteen month period. Charts 4.01-4.02 provide this with both groups of fans. However, to understand what the meaning of each of these, it is necessary to look at the particular contexts of the two clubs.

⁶⁰ The anomaly to these results was players who were born/raised in Eire, which was not perceived to be *foreign*.

⁶¹ Indeed, King (1995) argues that Eric Cantona was only ambiguously accepted by Leeds United fans in that he 'represented a comforting image of Europe – one that could be accommodated within an English framework to produce something superior' (ibid: 20) and therefore did not seriously challenge the notion of 'Englishness'.

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The following formula was devised to consider this temporal distribution of critical discourse:

$$\frac{\left(\frac{\text{NumberofCriticisms}}{\text{(TotalNumberofComments / NumberofDays)}} \right)}{\text{NumberofPlayersByTerritory}}$$

This formula begins by dividing the number of total comments collected during each given month by the number of randomly selected days which fell within that period of time. This provided the mean number of comments per day in each month. This figure then divided the number of criticisms made of each territorially defined player category. This equation presented the number of criticisms given to each territorial player category over the fourteen months. However, much like in the previous section, it was decided that a fairer representation would be given if this figure was further divided by the number of players in each squad who hailed from the particular territories. This meant that player categories which included a large number of players were not unfairly represented. The final figure provided an index score from which Charts 4.01 and 4.02 could be plotted. The highest index scores indicate the most frequent criticisms.

When examining the results, the first contextual point to understand is the Liverpool career of former manager Gerard Houllier (1998-2004). Houllier's induction to the Liverpool manager's job came in the summer of 1998, when he was appointed to work alongside existing (Bootle-born) manager Roy Evans. Williams and Hopkins (2005: 45) argued that the decision of the Liverpool board to appoint Houllier as their first non-British coach, was swayed by the success of Houllier's compatriot, Arsene

Wenger at Arsenal. Whether his appointment was due to the changing fashion of football or not, Houllier had a very respectable coaching record, which included a number of positions within the French FA.

After an inconsistent start to Houllier's Liverpool managerial career (which saw Liverpool third in the English Premiership) Roy Evans resigned as co-manager in November 1998. According to Williams and Hopkins (2005), Evans' departure merited an editorial in *The Guardian*, detailing how the move 'signalled the passing of the decent, but limited, British manager and his replacement by the more technical and educated Continental equivalent' (Williams and Hopkins *ibid*: 48).⁶² At the same time, Houllier awarded himself a five-year period to 'turn Liverpool around'.

Williams and Hopkins (2005: 48) saw this length of time as generous, given that the club had finished in the top four in each of the previous four seasons.

The research begins five months beyond the anticipated five year period, in April 2004, with Gerard Houllier still manager of Liverpool. Under Houllier's guidance, Liverpool won one UEFA Cup, one FA Cup and two League Cups – three of the honours were achieved in 2000/1 season, with the other, a League Cup, in 2002/3. Liverpool were positioned in the crucial fourth Champions League qualification spot but were being challenged by Newcastle United for that place. Moreover, according to Tomkins (2005), Liverpool fans had not visibly noticed the team improving since their glorious 2000/1 season; significantly, they had not won either the Champions League or the English Premiership (which the results in Chapter Three highlighted to be the two most important trophies) under Houllier. Given the importance placed

⁶² This hints at what Rygren (2003; 2004) refers to as the 'illegitimate competitors' frame, and is elaborated later in the chapter.

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upon Champions League qualification, it is also noteworthy that Liverpool had gained only a UEFA Cup place in the 2002/3 season and by 'August 2003 the small band of Houllier critics in the national press could already smell blood' by calling for his dismissal (Williams and Hopkins 2005: 61). Ultimately, in the following month, Liverpool confirmed their fourth place and Champions League qualifying finish which, as pointed out in Chapter Three, was regarded as the 'minimum acceptable target'. According to Tomkins, given the expected timetable for success, the season was regarded as very poor, with Liverpool finishing 15 points behind third placed Manchester United and 30 points behind champions Arsenal. This is reflected in Chart 4.1 which, on the evidence of the research sample, shows the mean number of derogatory comments given about football players and coaches each day within the fourteen month sample. Therefore, if as Tomkins suggests, the closing two months of the 2003/4 season were 'low' points in Liverpool supportership, it is unsurprising that non-national Europeans - led by Houllier - were overwhelmingly blamed by the fans. Furthermore, the group who carried the second highest weight of disappointment were the non-European players, followed by the non-local British players. At the same time, an enduring pattern emerged whereby local players, especially if they had graduated through the clubs youth set up, were least likely to be blamed for poor performances.

On 24th May 2004, Houllier was relieved of his duties as Liverpool manager. This is reflected in Chart 4.1, as derogatory comments relating to non-British players/coaches declined in June 2004 (which marked the 'close season' when competitive club football was not played). During the fourteen month sample, such criticisms never rose to this level again. However, between November 2004 and January 2005, there

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was a mini-resurgence in non-European ill-feeling. This centred upon two issues. First, Australian forward, Harry Kewell, was picked out for particular criticism, mainly because of a large number of injury problems. This particularly invoked 'welfare chauvinist' frames such as those offered by the following Liverpool supporter:

Its always gonna be easy to name a few foreign players who have more than battled in that red shirt, I mean, we've signed hundreds of them in the last 25 years or so, and in the same vein, its always gonna be easy to name a few British shirkers, as we've also had a bagful of Brits on our books. Exceptions prove nothing.

Point is, its easier to find a battling heart, or a kid who might just know what football means to the average British punter, in this country.

Get your academy right - get the battling qualities right - get a winning mentality and add to it with some foreign class, not the other way round. Lad's like Kewell, with all his faux injuries, don't really give a fuck – they don't earn their wages. OUR lads do.

Been there, done that. 15 years of foreigners = no league.

Liverpool fan (34) (7th November 2004)

Discourse which shared this sentiment was typical when Liverpool fans were discussing Harry Kewell. Interpreting this situation with any level of absolute methodological certainty is difficult. It is entirely possible that Kewell, as an English speaking Australian who was signed from English club, Leeds United (in the summer of 2003) was not always explicitly thought of as *foreign*, as he was in this comment. However, Harry Kewell was consistently criticised over this period – in which Liverpool disappointingly fluctuated between 5th and 7th place in the Premiership – utilising frames which Rydgren suggests are typical of far-Right xenophobic criticisms. Second, these criticisms coincided with Liverpool's surprise FA Cup elimination at Championship side Burnley. At this point, Senegal midfielder, Salif

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Diao, despite only starting four games all season and not playing in this particular game, was disproportionately criticised as supporters took the opportunity of poor results to look for weaknesses in the entire playing squad. On the other hand, in May 2005, the index figure of criticisms was small. This reflected an upbeat atmosphere amongst supporters which grew from Liverpool's semi-final Champions League defeat of Chelsea on 3rd May and climaxed with the club's Champions League victory in the subsequent final on 25th May. However, during this period, the critical frames which were made largely addressed Kewell, especially after he was substituted just 23 minutes into the Champions League final, with already Liverpool trailing AC Milan by one goal.

Chart 4.01 shows that these patterns generally proved to be enduring throughout the season. However, much like Lyotard's (1984) insights into subjective judgements in art, opinions relating to individual players' performance lack clear objectivity. This means that it is difficult to state whether 'homegrown' players have consistently performed better than 'other' players, or whether this was based upon unfair perceptions. At this point, the closest an estimation that can be made concerns tangible outputs, such as goals. Indeed, at the end of the 2003/4 season, although local and other English players occupied the four out of the top five Liverpool 'leading goalscorer' places (Australian Harry Kewell was the other member), Finnish centre-half Sami Hyypia scored a respectable five goals. It can be cautiously stated that non-national European players did not deserve the number of criticisms they received. Similarly, on 27th February 2005, local born captain, Steven Gerrard scored an own goal in the League Cup final, which was played against Chelsea. Interestingly, 'other' British and European players were more widely criticised during

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this month, that followed on from the very poor January period in which, as previously noted, Liverpool was surprisingly beaten in the third round FA Cup tie at lower division Burnley, as well as by Chelsea, Manchester United and Southampton (the latter finished the season in the bottom place of the Premiership table). Also, November had previously been marked by a defeat to Monaco, which made qualification to the Champions League second round seem unlikely⁶³ and it was non-European players, followed by non-national European players who took most of the criticism. At the other end of the scale, May 2005 marked a high point in Liverpool's recent history as it triumphed over AC Milan in the Champions League final, so derogatory comments aimed at *foreign* players were minimal.

Chart 4.01 highlights that when Liverpool's prospects are improving, non-national players are accepted, with very few negative comments. However, when results are not as good, it is non-British European, and non-European players who are the first to be blamed by fans. A way of explaining this is through 'conditional acceptance'. Indeed, Back *et al.* (2001: 93) point out that English football is riddled with such contradictions and ambiguities, as they argue that 'black' football players become 'contingent insiders' in white supporter culture on the condition that they are perceived to be improving the team's overall play. However, this is not to say that black football players are completely accepted: opposing fans often use a non-white player's ethnic background to goad players, and when the team hits poor form, racial stereotypes are used to blame their own black players. For instance, Back *et al.* noticed that black players were often thought of as 'lazy' in comparison to their white counterparts, whilst a white normality is always assumed. 'Differences' are never

⁶³ Of course, eventually Liverpool beat Olympiakos in the following game to qualify for the next round.

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forgotten, but during a successful period are not seen to be relevant. Exactly the same principle occurs with 'other' players, in that during successful periods it is not important where a player originates, but when the team begins to do less well it is *foreign* players who disproportionately take the blame. In short, deviations from the white, British norm are never forgotten, but may sometimes lay dormant. Therefore, from these results, the Bosman ruling which has lubricated a European transfer market, has not broken down previous stereotypes of foreigners in the way that *The Economist* (2003) suggests (see Chapter One), but may have allowed existing cultural prejudices to be reinforced.

Chart 4.02 illustrates that Oldham Athletic fans were highly likely to criticise non-British European players during the months of June and July (2004). This was the period in which the 2004 European Championships were held. In this case, the denigration of non-national football players was prompted by a deep sense of national identification in which European *foreigners* were negatively framed as a by-product of support for the English national team. An extreme example of this is given by the following Oldham Athletic supporter, who denigrates *foreign* Europeans (in this case French people) by utilising an 'illegitimate ethno-difference frame' (cf. Rydgren 2003; 2004):

france..??? who the fuck are france, in our hour of need the English will pull it of, we are the superior race on this planet, when the going gets tough the tough get going, with our backs to the wall we come out fighting, when lesser people wilt we flourish, when all looks lost we will overcome what other mere mortals cannot achieve...all of this will see us through,, come on engalnd,,

Oldham Athletic fan (15) (13th June 2004)

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Yet, these criticisms were not significantly sustained throughout the playing season (August 2004-May 2005). The major reason for this was that Oldham Athletic employed just one non-British European player – the Dutch defender, Stefan Stam - during the sample period. The impact of this was that it would have been difficult for Oldham Athletic supporters to *blame* poor team form on *other* European employees. This is in contrast to Liverpool, who employed 19 such players (and was led by Spanish manager, Rafael Benitez).

However, unlike Liverpool, the majority of Oldham Athletic players either graduated through the youth team, or are British and have arrived for relatively small fees or 'free' transfers from competitor English clubs. Therefore, a larger number of youth team members had progressed to the first team at Oldham Athletic than at Liverpool. This was especially true in the period of the research, given that Oldham Athletic was declared bankrupt in 2003, which was significant because local youth team players replaced more expensive non-local players in the first team. This was due to economic resources rather than playing quality and inevitably meant that weaker players progressed to the first team. As a result, Chart 4.02 shows a different pattern to Chart 4.01, in that Oldham Athletic fans appeared to show little difference in the number of criticisms attached to local and non-local British players, as appeared to be the case amongst Liverpool fans.

On the other hand, during the sample period, Oldham Athletic did employ three non-European players. Chart 4.02 shows that despite potential novel *foreign* exoticism, these players were not exempt from criticism. Indeed, in February 2005, each non-European player was criticised, on average, every fourth day. This is approximately

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as high as the criticism of non-European players by Liverpool fans in May 2004. At the centre of this denigration was Australian goalkeeper, Les Pogliacomi, who was criticised for the team's poor run of form which saw the club slide four places, from 16th to 20th in 'League One'. This was significant because it meant that Oldham Athletic ended February in a 'relegation place' which would signal league demotion if the team performance/results did not improve before the end of the season. Indeed, as noted in Chapter Three, avoiding relegation is the main league placing aspiration of Oldham Athletic fans.

Despite this, the overall significant finding from Chart 4.02 is that Oldham Athletic supporters do not differentiate between local and non-local British players when deciding which group constitutes the 'we'. Liverpool supporters do make this distinction by showing that when the club's fortunes do not prosper, non-local British players are open to criticism. This may not be surprising given that Belchem (2000: x) argues that many people in Liverpool see the city as '[i]n the north of England, but not of it' and similar sentiments formed a Chapter Three frame ('Town/City is not of England').

CONCLUSION: A PREJUDICED NORMALITY?

The argument which emerges from this chapter is that xenophobic attitudes within football are more openly articulated when 'threats' emerge. According to Gellner (1995a), Triandafyllidou (2001) and Rydgren (2003; 2004; 2004a) xenophobic reaction mirrors the patterns and news events in the wider society. Therefore, whilst Harris (2003: ix) might argue that 'within a generation England has become the most cosmopolitan footballing nation on earth', when faced with sociological rigour, his

comments lack validity. According to Nussbaum (1996: 138), a cosmopolitan order of any note 'works toward a state of things in which all of the differences will be non-hierarchically understood'. This is clearly not the case in English football cultures with the prevalence of xenophobic reaction. However, within the matrix of xenophobia, some dimensions of prejudice are more likely to be present than others. Much like Delanty's (1995) warning that the opening up of Europe may potentially open the lid to fascist social actions, the opening up of the European transfer market gives an opportunity for the xenophobic attitudes to emerge. Whereas Chapter Three demonstrated that participation within a football defined European cultural space was helping Liverpool fans to develop positive 'European' narratives based around football fan experiences, the increasing dominance of a Europe-centred transfer market had the opposite effect. Indeed, Liverpool fans' willingness to protect locally-born/former youth team players may actually be a response to the international transfer market, in that local players are increasingly rare, treasured 'commodities' and should be therefore cherished. This code of behaviour is not prevalent with Oldham Athletic fans, in that they often see local born/former youth team players in their club's first team in contrast to the 'exotic' appeal of *foreign* players.

The difference between the two sets of results is that in Chapter Three, Liverpool fans' local interests were highly compatible with European experience, here, *foreign* Europeans are potentially threatening. Alternatively, Oldham Athletic fans, prompted by English national team (rather than club-based) issues are likely to frame all non-British players as *foreign* (particularly utilising the illegitimate ethno-difference frame). However, Charts 4.01-4.02 highlight that it is too simplistic to argue that the presence of *foreign* players has made supporters of the clubs universally either more

cosmopolitan or xenophobic. Rather, it is more fruitful to follow Back *et al* (2001) by suggesting that acceptance is 'conditional'. This means that when clubs like Liverpool's on the pitch prospects are growing, non-national players are accepted. In concrete terms, negative comments about such players are minimal. For Liverpool supporters, this is evident in the months of April and May in 2005 (see Chart 4.01). However, when results are not as good, it is *foreign* players who are the first to be blamed by fans - such as in April and May 2004 (see Chart 4.01). The principle of 'conditional acceptance' most aptly explains this. Indeed, Back *et al.* (2001: 93) point out that English football is riddled with contradictions and ambiguities. They convincingly choose to display this by pointing out that 'black' football players become 'contingent insiders' in white supporter culture. This acceptance is conditional, based around the idea that they are perceived to be improving the team's overall play. Yet, black football players are never completely accepted: opposing fans often use non-white players' ethnic backgrounds to goad them, and when the team hits poor form, racial stereotypes are used to aggravate their own team's black players. For instance, Back *et al.* noticed that black players were often thought of as 'lazy' in comparison to their white counterparts, whilst a white normality is always assumed. In the context of this research, it is fair to suggest that xenophobic 'differences' are never forgotten, but during successful periods they are not seen to be relevant.

The same principle occurs with *foreign* football players. During successful periods, it is not important where a player originates, but when the team begins to do less well, it is *foreigners* who take most of the blame. This means that the Bosman ruling, which has lubricated a European transfer market, has not unambiguously broken down

stereotypes of *foreigners* in the way that examples in Chapter One suggest, even if a 'conditional cosmopolitanism' amongst fans is occasionally assumed. Yet, expressions of fan culture are not the same amongst the sample of Oldham Athletic supporters. As well as employing fewer non-British players during the period of the research, the club has had weaker connections to foreign players than Liverpool throughout its history. Indeed, Harris (2003: 425) has pointed out that from its conception in 1895, until 2002, Oldham Athletic had employed just 21 non-British/Irish players.⁶⁴ The infrequent utilisation of such players meant that the exotic 'novelty value' had been retained and that they were not as frequently criticised as British players, who were seen as an unexciting 'standard'.

However, this is not to say that xenophobic discourse was alien to the group, but was prevalent during times of international tournaments (such as Euro2004). During such periods, xenophobia became the 'gloomy face of nationalism' (see Bauman 2001: 91) and was communicated in order to show support for the English football team. This was not explicitly evident amongst Liverpool supporters, but given Williams' (1999: 95) claim that fans may support club players during international tournaments (see Chapter One), this is not surprising. Thus, it is clear that xenophobic attitudes emerge under different conditions and it is therefore difficult to label individual supporter groups as coherently *xenophobic*. Hence, xenophobia is most usefully thought of as a multileveled prejudice and it is impossible to state whether the international transfer market has led to either its decline or strength. This is consistent with Rydgren's view that, in the wider society, xenophobia exists as a 'subjectively rational' phenomenon in response to perceived threats (Rydgren 2004; 2004a). Therefore, Rydgren argues

⁶⁴ By comparison, Liverpool employed 51 non-British/Irish players in the same period of time.

that xenophobia can only be successfully overcome through understanding that prejudiced discourse is uttered for reasons which are perceived to be rational. In the case of this chapter, threat is perceived at many levels to club and country football aspirations and the potential denial of these hopes and goals brings about xenophobic reactions toward 'foreigners'. Thus, perceived underachievement becomes the catalyst for mildly xenophobic prejudices to seep out from the fan cultures. It would be foolhardy to consider a perception of *threat* as *irrational*, even though it is communicated in different ways, with different groups targeted at various times.

Thus, football supporters voice xenophobic discourse, much like other forms of prejudice (such as those based upon ethnicity, class and sexuality) to berate opponents, and in times of perceived underachievement, players who are employed by their team.⁶⁵ Acceptance of players who deviate away from the spectator norm – namely, white, British and heterosexual – is never complete, but always contingent. However, unrepentant loyalties to football players is a romantic notion which does not usually exist in the canon of contemporary football fandom: if an underachieving player appears to conform to the given norms, supporters will speculate into his private affairs until they find an issue with which they can denigrate him.

Gotsbachner (2001) argues that the contemporary world is best characterised as a 'prejudiced normality' in which all individuals have values and personality dimensions which they imagine to be superior to 'others'. Potentially, this facilitates out-group hostilities. Sports, such as football, encourage vocal, partisan support in which prejudices from the wider society rise to the fore. These will be turned upon

⁶⁵ An example of homophobia in English football supporter culture is the furore that broke in February 2006 regarding the identities of the two Premiership football players who were rumoured to have engaged in sexual relations. This story was initially started in the tabloid press but found its way onto multiple Internet messageboard forums.

opponents, who are perceived as a threat to club success at any opportunity. However, in times of low team success, the threat may be perceived as moving from the external opposition to the internal team. A threat *from within* shifts criticisms onto 'home' players. The idea that players 'are not good enough' is not particularly comforting for fans of the club – if the team simply lacks skill and athleticism, it is difficult to see how its fortunes will dramatically improve – so other criticisms are made. These rely upon prejudiced dispositions, which, in the case of xenophobia may originate from right wing sectors of politics and the popular media. *Foreign* players (irrespective of whether they are European or not) are easy targets for criticism because they are *different*. Furthermore, it is irrelevant where a foreign player originates as institutions within the wider society have produced a national culture, whereby to hail from anywhere other than Britain *is foreign*. Football is best seen as a manifestation of this culture rather than having a transformatory capacity. Therefore the contribution of this chapter to the research project is that it demonstrates that *both* Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters' discursive practices show them to speak from a position guided by the dominant local and British societies. The possible emergence of a European society has not eradicated prejudices and – unlike in Chapter Three - this means that there is no hint of a European identification developing from either set of fans.

Chapter Five

EUROPEAN POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS: OR, HOW THE BNP MAY HELP TO DEEPEN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION – A CASE FOR VIEWING EUROPE THROUGH A LOCAL LENS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter critically assesses how football supporters relate to EU institutions such as the EU, EP and the European Commission. The central argument is that although football consumption does not explicitly prohibit the development of a political consciousness in the way that Chomsky (1983), Eco (1986), Adorno and Horkheimer (1992 [1944]) envisage, it does not aggressively assist any such developments. Indeed, academic research into the links between sport and politics has shown a greater degree of mutuality than the aforementioned credit.⁶⁶ Yet, this there is no evidence in this chapter to suggest that either group of supporters cultivates a European political consciousness directly through the experience of football fandom. However, the football supporters may develop particular political identifications/consciousness for a myriad of reasons, not least because they are also residents in geographical locations which have experienced particular socio-political conditions. Football supporter communicative spaces, such as Internet messageboards, are also places in which other local issues can be debated but given the apolitical theme of such sites, drawn conclusions must be cautious. In this chapter, the results of Chapter Three are ‘turned upon their head’ because it is Oldham

⁶⁶ For examples of the direct link between sport and politics, see Beck (1999; 2003), Darby (2002) and Levermore and Budd (2004).

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Athletic supporters rather than Liverpool fans who are, in some cases, aligning with a an *idea* of Europe (in this case the European integration movement).

The contribution of this chapter begins to think about whether there may be any relationship between the experiences related to supporters' consumption of football and the construction or further development of a European identification which provides legitimacy for the EU and its associated institutions. This is potentially important to this study because King (2000; 2003) suggested that his case study group of Manchester United fans were familiar with a cultural idea of Europe – even employing terms such as 'Europhile' and 'Euroseptic' – but did not distinctively see themselves as European because they had 'not transferred their political and cultural allegiances to some ill-defined entity called Europe or some little-known supranational institution like the European Commission' (King 2000: 426; 2003). King's research could be interpreted as highlighting an apparent fracture between cultural identifications, which may be developed through trans-European fan travel, and political identifications, which are not affected by activities associated to football fandom. In the light of this evidence, it is worth discussing whether either of the two groups of football supporters discussed (or possibly even identified with) a definition of Europe which is conceived in principally political terms. This is especially the case given that many social scientists see the quest for the EU's political legitimacy at the core of any interest in 'European identity' (Shore 2000).

However, before proceeding into the main body of this chapter, an awareness of two severe limitations must be made clear. First, consistent with the previous two chapters, this chapter's evidence has been gleaned from football messageboards.

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Although people on such websites do discuss numerous issues which are not explicitly related to the experiences of football fandom, it is noted that an open media source which football fans occupy is an imperfect way of gauging political understandings. To apply Bauman's framework for understanding identifications (2000; 2004), it is important to recognise that a football fan may choose not to ever discuss European politics on a messageboard in which people don their sports' hats, but may click onto a politics website and freely discuss such issues. Therefore, individual political consciousnesses cannot be fully understood using this data. Group political consciousnesses, however may be better understood in so far an online debate of this nature may reflect a group awareness of emanating issues. Still, the results must be treated cautiously and not over generalised. Second, it must be noted that just 43 fan comments from both clubs' fans debate this ill-defined political notion of Europe; allowing for the dispersion across the four master frames and their associated sub-ordinate themes, it means that the numbers being dealt with in this chapter are very small. To counter this, the chapter will only discuss the number of frame incidences rather than percentages, as these may allude to a false impression (although for the sake of consistency, percentages are retained in Tables 5.01-5.05).

European Political Identifications

The term 'European political identification' is contentious to some. Cerutti (2003) tentatively defines the notion of 'political identity' as a set of socio-political values/principles which are espoused to the general public and make a political group feel 'lived in'. It is sensible to think of reactions to changing policies as a in a state of flux rather than a fixed reality (Elias 2000 [1994]). This is similar to the process nature of cultural identifications. Indeed, many suggest that questions relating to

European political legitimacy have often been answered with cultural, rather than political, suggestions (Beck 2000; Bleiker 2000; Cederman 1999; 2001; Mayer and Palmowski 2004; Meinhof 2004).

In this chapter it will be argued that political identifications, like cultural identifications, must be constructed through human agency. Before doing this, it is necessary to understand the rejected case for a fixed notion of political culture. Illustrating this, Skack (2005) and De Beus (2001) have argued that a European political identity demonstrates a belief in democracy and fraternity. This definition is not entirely problematic, given, first, the roots of democracy are firmly fixed within the empires of Ancient Greece and Rome and second, the ways in which the European integration project has long been used as a 'soft' power in order to improve democracy and human rights (Leonard 2005). Yet, in much the same way that Martin (2005) argued that European supporter identities develop through their football club's institutional values, such descriptions of European political identifications imply that belonging and loyalties develop without human actions. This suggests a 'reified' notion of identity, in so far as it equates such cultures with predefined ways of behaving. In other words, it espouses the claim that if an individual/social group behaves in a particular way or has a specific belief, they are 'European'. This is an uncomfortable assumption given that, as argued in Chapter Two, identifications are more open and exist through social agency. Indeed, Wodak (2004) points out that European political identification clearly exist amongst elites, but she is less certain that such attitudes resonate with the mass public. Bruter (2003; 2004) recognises this potential problem by arguing that most contemporary political systems have been highly conscious of the need to generate mass common identities - and the EU is no

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different - even though Gavin (2000) and Mayer and Palmowski (2004) suggest that there are growing concerns amongst pro-EU politicians and that citizens are not embracing such cultures.

Bryant (2006: 260) backs this argument up by suggesting that the 2004 EU enlargement has distanced the reality of a European political identification. His argument is that the larger the EU becomes, the less *real* it seems. This line of reasoning echoes the typical 1980s British Eurosceptic position which favoured an ever expanding European Community because it was thought that expansion would reduce its overall effectiveness (see for instance, Thatcher 1988) and leave little room for citizens to tell positive narratives about it. Thus, whilst Herrmann and Brewer (2004: 2-3) argue that although EU officials did not expect political identities to 'form overnight', the regular change in the aims and objectives of the EU (even accounting for the *process* nature of Europeanisation) make it difficult for an enduring European political identification to emerge. This is particularly pertinent given the lack of efficient European political information channels (Gavin 2000). That said, this does not directly answer the question of how a European political identification might be defined.

Again, Cerutti (2003) arguably provides the most comprehensive definition by demonstrating that European political identifications are composed of two parts. First, in line with the cosmopolitan ideas laid down in the previous chapter, Cerutti (*ibid*: 27-8) suggests that European political identities may emerge from a unified 'we' emotion between European citizens across various regions and member states which would prohibit intra-European xenophobia. This would stretch the imagined

political community beyond the boundaries of the nation-state to a *perception* of Europe. However, if the EU were to exist as a tangible-state like entity, it may need a coherent 'other' to develop identifications and, as discussed in Chapter One, this is not easily identified. The central argument within the last chapter was that neither Liverpool or Oldham Athletic supporters enduringly referred to non-British European football icons as 'we/us'. This is not to say that football-based values are the same in the wider social world, but they may provide an indication of social attitudes.

Second, Cerutti argues that common EU citizens' values can be developed from, and rooted within, the European institutions such as the Commission, Parliament, Central Bank and the Court of Justice. This helps EU citizens feel they share common 'chances, constraints and responsibilities' (Cerutti 2003: 29). Such commonalities might provide European narratives, although they are less likely to excite the football fans in this research than the European narratives highlighted in Chapter Three.

Additionally, Mayer and Palmowski (2004) provide guidelines to measure the development of European political identities. Once again the role of the European institutions is crucial in at least three ways. First, the EU has aided the construction of common European norms and values. Mayer and Palmowski (ibid: 590) offer that the EU has indirectly become the reference point for many identifications through its legislation. This is similar to the *identification with a perception of Europe* which is discussed in Chapter Three, yet once again the narratives emerging from this are less likely to be enduringly positive as those from European football experience unless a threatening 'other' is identified. To be sure, it is unlikely that football fans would declare themselves as European just because they are governed by EU legislation. This especially the case given that, during the sample period, no Liverpool or Oldham Athletic fan described him/herself as European because of trans-European football

experience. Second, Mayer and Palmowski argue that a European political identification may be emerging through the cultural impacts of the 'resurgence of the region', or subsidiarity (see also McNeil 2004). The cultural dimension of this argument is sound yet, the authors fail to elaborate how this may produce a political identification and if/how this may differ from cultural identities. Finally, Mayer and Palmowski (2004) suggest that a European political identification may be formed by 'adding value' to national identities because trans-European issues may be tied to the nation-state, meaning that discourse relating to national affairs produces European debate. Habermas (2001) largely accepts this argument by suggesting that European political identifications can be cultivated through political debate which is communicated through a vibrant public sphere. He argues that this can assist the development of a stronger democratic structure within the EU. Habermas suggests that if this potential is realised, the basis of a meaningful notion of European citizenship will develop. This argument is potentially the most fruitful, although it would mean that European political identifications would be anchored within the nation-state to which an individual belongs.

Indeed, Shore (2004: 28) points out that the official narratives suggest that the EU is eager to develop a stronger sense of identification above the level of the nation-state, whilst not detracting from national and sub-national cultures. Yet, Shore does not believe that a common political identification can flourish through these mechanisms given that 'no one falls in love with a common market' or a range of policies (Shore *ibid*: 28). A similar argument also emerges from research conducted by Orchard (2002) as she states that all identifications are necessarily interwoven within culture, which is often absent within political identities. This account would be consistent

with the argument which is being outlined in this chapter in that, for many people, European politics does not seem to produce strongly favourable narratives or 'others' which would produce coherent European identifications. Given that the reason why the groups of supporters share group membership (i.e. the cultural experiences of fandom) it is perhaps better to refrain from the using the term 'political identification' in the collective sense. Rather, following Orchard's recommendation, it is less contentious to refer to the impacts of the European political institutions as a 'consciousness'. Lepsius (2001) is also sceptical that European identities exist at the institutional level and argues that the values espoused by the EU often result in the development of a European consciousness. By preferring this lexicon, the research is allowed to explicitly recognise that voices within the same supporter group may not share a common political position relating to European integration, but this may constitute an active political public sphere. Although the sample research period spans fourteen months, much of the most interesting material was generated around the time of the 2004 European Parliamentary elections. This chapter will explore the existence of European political consciousnesses amongst the two supporter groups, by first exploring how they relate, if at all, to the European political institutions and second, considering the role of far-Right political parties in this. Before detailing the results section, the next part of the chapter will provide background information on the 2004 European Parliamentary election.

European Parliamentary Election 2004

Hix *et al.* (2003) argue that European parliamentary powers have steadily increased since its inception in 1952.⁶⁷ Nowadays, the European Parliament (EP) comprises of 732 members, directly elected in EU-wide elections every five years. According to Villes (2001: 25) the EP cannot enact laws like national parliaments, although its legislative role has been increased over the years. Therefore, the EP acts as the EU public forum in that it can question other European institutions, amend or reject the EU budget and even dismiss the European Commission.

Yet, despite these powers, former UK Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook (2004) argued that past-French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing saw the EP elections as connecting EU citizens to an idea of Europe and therefore producing a political consciousness. In 1979, the EP was democratically elected for the first time and replaced a system of government nominated EP members. In more recent times, Gabel (2003) argues that there are at least three reasons why public support is of paramount importance to the EP. First, a parliament which represents citizens should have public respect and support in order to retain legitimacy. Second, public support is likely to affect the behaviour of legislators, with some bureaucrats likely to seek early retirement, or changes of office, if public support is not forthcoming. Third, a lack of support for the EP may curtail the authority of its legislation (see also Mauer 2003). Thus, a supported EP strengthens the overall position of the EU (Gray and Statham 2005; Rittberger 2003)

⁶⁷ According to Hix *et al.* (2003), the EP can be traced back to the formation of the ECSC when the six members (France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Italy) set up a decision making and consultative mechanism, made up of individuals from each member state. As the ECSC changed to the larger EEC in 1957, the competencies of the group grew. In 1979, the EP became more democratic with regionally defined EMPs elected for the first time.

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On 10-13th June 2004 the sixth European Parliamentary elections were held in the newly expanded EU. In the UK, the election coincided with local and regional ballots and was the first European election to be held in the using postal-only voting in four areas. It was hoped that the postal option would boost turnout rates, given the consumerist choices which voters had gained. This decision was prompted by consistently low ballot turnouts since the first EP election, which was a European-wide phenomenon (Laffan 2004).

Subsequently, the 2004 UK ballot benefited from 'the highest ever turnout for a European election' with 38 per cent of the eligible population voting (Mulholland 2004).⁶⁸ However, despite the increased turnout, the UK ranked 12th among member states and yielded a far lower voting share than the 46.6 per cent EU average. Furthermore, the 2004 results mask the discontent many UK voters had with the Europe integration project, as the anti EU party, United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) took seats in London, South-East, South-West, Yorkshire and Humber and East and West Midlands regions (Grice and Castle 2004). Indeed, Toynbee (2004) pointed out that many of the increased number of British voters were staunchly opposed to the EU. She argues that this demonstrated a clear dearth of European political consciousness in the UK and fuelled the argument of 'Little Englanders'. Yet, while this result may have illustrated a continued lack of belief in the European institutions, it is contentious to argue that this spelt a lack of political consciousness: Toynbee is wrong to assume that political understanding necessarily produces consensus because vibrant politics are

⁶⁸ This was a significantly larger turnout than the 1999 elections in which just 24 per cent of the British population polled votes (Grice and Castle 2004). Indeed, according to Bryant (2006: 269) in the four EP elections prior to 2004, UK turnout was the lowest on four occasions and joint lowest on the fifth. However, this turnout was still significantly less than what can be expected for a national 'General' election. For instance, in the May 2005 General election, the turnout rate was 61.3 per cent.

based upon public debate. Additionally, the rise in anti-EU sentiment at 2004 election was felt across Europe, with increased power for the ERP/RRP. Overall the election results present a post-2004 EP dominated by the largely pro-European centre-right, but with a reduced majority and more power taken by far-Right 'Europhobes' (Black 2004b). From the pro-Europeanists point of view, these results were disappointing, given that the European institutions need support to retain legitimacy (Gabel 2003: 290).

Additionally, Black (2004b) argues that the most striking reflection of a lack of political enthusiasm for the European project came in the EU's 10 new member states, as voting levels were particularly low in the former Eastern bloc states. This ensured that the overall ballot turnout decreased from 49.8 per cent in the 1999 elections and followed a trend which had seen the percentage of eligible people voting fall with every election since 1979 (Black 2004b; Laffan 2004; Hix *et al.* 2003).⁶⁹ Black (2004b) argues that the low turnout represented a 'huge vote of no confidence in EU institutions' although Cook (2004) suggests that it may be the case that the low turnout was seen as the result of both a general dissatisfaction that the war on Iraq commenced without public support and the poor communication between politicians and voting public regarding the role of the EP. In short, a prevailing reason why the EP turnouts have been consistently poor is that a European political consciousness has not been developed across the society at large. Given the assumptions of Adorno and Horkheimer (1992 [1944]) Chomsky (1983; 2004) and Eco (1986) it is pertinent to ask if the sample football fans share the social/political apathy and distrust of the EU which the EP elections would suggest exists in the wide EU and UK societies?

⁶⁹ According to Laffan (2004: 95) pan-European voter turnout rate in the 1979 election was 65 per cent.

A POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS?

Beginning to tackle this question, Table 5.01 demonstrates the relative likelihood of the two sets of fans discussing the issue of European integration on the two football-themed messageboards. According to Cerutti (2003) a discourse prompted by the potential impacts of the European institutions is necessary if a European political consciousness is to be developed. Table 5.01 shows that Oldham Athletic supporters accounted for 38 out of 43 comments on European political discourse, with Liverpool fans contributing the remaining 5. This raises the question over whether the sample Liverpool fans are apolitical. Yet, data in Table 5.01 demonstrates that Liverpool fans were prepared to debate the issue of the war in Iraq. This helps to refute the suggestion that Liverpool fans are politically apathetic. Of the thirteen Liverpool fan comments which debated the war on Iraq, all were unanimous in their anti-war stance, whereas Oldham Athletic supporters were undecided, with four anti-war comments and two which argued that the attack was justified. On the grounds that Liverpool fans openly debated the war on Iraq, but were less likely to talk about European integration, it would be possible to argue that either the EU was not a major issue to such fans or that supporters had been so Europeanised through their football experiences that they no longer felt a need to discuss European politics. Given that Chapter Three highlighted that Liverpool supporters were loathe to describe themselves as European (which was analogous to Euro-nationalism), the first option is more likely. Yet, it appears to be more significant in the discourse of Oldham Athletic supporters.

However, questions relating to consciousnesses emerging from European integration are vexed, with mixed opinion from both sets of fans. This point acknowledged, 'pro'

and 'anti' integration stances can be configured on a number of levels, as highlighted in Table 5.02. This table shows data that has been framed rather than coded to provide additional nuance. Four crucial master frames have emerged from these results. First, there are affirmative pro-European integration comments which make very clear statements that highlight the benefits of European integration. The second frame addresses affirmative anti-European integration discourse that highlights clear reasons why such a political movement is undesirable. The third frame is the remedial pro-European bracket which largely addresses affirmative anti-integration discourse by offering a defence for integration. The final frame is a remedial anti-European discourse, which is reactive to the affirmative pro-European integration frame by offering reasons why such statements should be doubted. It is difficult to produce a hierarchy of frame importance, although as clear statements the affirmative frames demonstrate the strongest beliefs, while the remedial frames show a willingness to engage in political debate, in that they are answering potential criticisms of the affirmative frames. Therefore, affirmative frames are representative of strong opinions whereas remedial frames show willingness to debate. From Table 5.02, it is interesting to note that Liverpool supporters did not enter political debate by utilising remedial frames in that those few supporters who referred to European integration used bold statements which indicated that they were in favour (2 comments) or opposed (3 comments). The spread of Oldham Athletic fan comments was wider. Whilst 18 supporter comments framed integration in an affirmatively negative way (therefore giving statements as to why the process was not desirable), there was also support for affirmative pro-European and remedial pro-European stances. No Oldham Athletic supporters spoke about the integration movement using remedial anti-European frames. This highlights that fact that those who doubted the

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benefits of European integration were not prepared to argue against affirmative stances. This is significant because those who were in favour of integration were prepared to debate in order to justify their opinion. The next part of the chapter will continue to develop this argument by looking at the secondary frames within the three master frames which have been utilised.

AFFIRMATIVE PRO-EUROPEAN INTEGRATION FRAMES

Table 5.03 illustrates that there were five secondary patterns of discourse drawn upon from the affirmative pro-European integration frames. The most popular Oldham Athletic supporters' discourse was that the EU functions very well as a trading area, whilst Liverpool fans saw the value of integration as aiding their consumerist practices. This section will further elaborate the use of the secondary frames to support this master frame.

European integration assists consumerism

The idea that European integration assists consumerism was the only frame Liverpool fans used in order to support the political movement. Even then, this frame was mobilised by just two Liverpool supporters. This frame was also used by one Oldham Athletic fan. Below is an exchange between Liverpool fans (11) and (18) which highlights the use of this frame:

How much (officially) can you bring back, is it 3200 ciggies like the rest of the EU?

Liverpool fan (11) (20th May 2005)

I meant the turkish side if you wanted to buy booze n bensons [and hedges, cigarettes] for the trip, buy `em here but taking home, the limit is less cos they're not in the EU, think you can only buy 600 coming in and

200 leaving, they've just clamped down on it, used to be a free for all, tight bastards!!

Liverpool fan (18) (20th May 2005)

In this respect, both Liverpool fans (11) and (18) see the EU facilitating their consumer experiences which have been otherwise blunted by comparatively high levels of taxation in the UK. Therefore, the EU becomes a consumer zone, which the UK is not fully part of, that is embraced by Liverpool supporters. Burgess (2001: 94) points out that channels of popular media have helped to shape this attitude given the extensive coverage attributed to price comparisons which suggest that people in the UK are being 'ripped off' relative to people in continental Europe (and the US). It may also be possible to suggest that the European fan travel created by Liverpool's Champions League participation may have additionally prompted these questions. This is assumed because of the communication date which was five days before the Champions League final, and the explicit reference to Turkey's position to the EU.⁷⁰ Therefore, if this helps to constitute a political consciousness it seems as if trans-European football competition could assist a growing awareness of the impacts of the EU through a form of consumerism (i.e. shopping). However, this is not to say that Oldham Athletic supporters cannot develop a consciousness based upon the same grounds. For instance, Oldham Athletic fan (16) articulates similar sentiments to the two Liverpool fans, even though he has not travelled across the continent watching his team play. The importance of football, in this respect, therefore is secondary to tourism:

I think we should definitely embrace the EU. It's better than (rip-off) Britain – we pay more for Cars, CDs, Jeans etc. Lets have it, I say.

⁷⁰ The 2004/5 Champions League final was played in Istanbul.

Hence, Oldham Athletic fan (16) is articulating that the UK is significantly more expensive for goods such as cars, compact discs and jeans than the rest of the EU. On this basis, he is arguing that the European integration process should be embraced. In this sense shopping experiences have impacted favourably upon Oldham Athletic fan (16)'s impression of the EU and are therefore, on some level, creating a European political consciousness. However, the full impacts of this should be treated with caution. Cook and Crang (1996) adopt a Marxist approach by arguing that consumerism, as a by-product of capitalism, seduces publics into a false class consciousness and obscures the political interests of the ruling class; 'commodity fetishism' blunted public political imaginations. The case may be the same with the sample of football fans. To elaborate, the European integration project may be superficially producing a false consciousness based around the idea of lower consumer taxation. This is not to entirely negate the frame – the results of the chapter may yet show that consumerism provides a foothold to a deeper political consciousness – but in isolation, these results do not allow a convincing argument to be made. The next frame is considerably weightier when considering this, in that it looks at the argument that the EU is a unified territory.

Europe is one place, not many

This frame looks at how the European integration project has been legitimised by the idea that the EU is a unified territory. This frame shares a common epistemological position with Christiansen et al (1999) who argued that the EU is best considered as a single territory. Overall, this frame has not been heavily used, in that just one

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Oldham Athletic supporter used this frame to voice support for the integration movement.

With regards the Euro, well where's the problem? if you think we shouldn't share monetary policy with other parts of Europe, why does London and the South East share monetary policy with the North East? Why not follow your beliefs through on this and advocate breaking up the pound zone?

Oldham Athletic fan (7) (5th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (7) is communicating that the 'euro' currency should be used in his local area, because the UK is 'in Europe'. To return to Anderson's (1991 [1983]) position (highlighted in Chapter One), Oldham Athletic fan (7) has imagined his political/economic community to be the EU. It is with caution that too much can be taken from the significance of this statement, given that it is generally isolated. However, this statement appears to be completely contradictory to the results in Chapter Three, which indicated that Oldham Athletic fans saw European nation-states as their 'others' and demonstrated strong nationalistic sentiments. The next frame contains the argument that the EU functions well as a trading area.

EU functions very well as a trading area

Table 5.03 shows that this frame was drawn upon 8 times by Oldham Athletic fans. In the academic literature, Rosamund (1999) illuminates this by suggesting that *Europe* functions particularly well as an economic space and that a contemporary strength of the EU is that it regulates European capitalism, which is markedly different from the US-led global capitalism. However, he argues that the EU should not seek to directly move beyond these parameters but should strengthen its

distinctive economic position. Oldham Athletic fan (17)'s comment is typical of this argument:

When I said "keeping trade routes open" i did mean staying in Europe and not pulling out altogether, what i do not want is for europe to effectively run our country, we should be a member of the european union but keep most of our affairs internal.

Oldham Athletic fan (17) (6th June 2004)

Hence, Oldham Athletic fan (17) is arguing that the EU functions as a trade area. Villes (2001) claims that the uniqueness of European integration is that sovereign nation-states delegate their responsibilities and exercise it jointly. Roche (1992) suggests that member states enter into arrangements through freewill to promote national strengths and so the movement may be termed 'postnational' in that it arises beyond the nation-state but in a different way to a sovereign super state.⁷¹ Delanty (2000: 109-10) argues that the EU entered into a postnational stage in the post-Maastricht era. The main objective in this phase was social integration and replaced the older notions of economic and political steering, which was characteristic of the first two stages. The first stage is most interesting in the light of this frame, as Delanty (*ibid*: 109) argues that it was initiated by the need to repair political tensions between European nation-states which became manifest in the Second World War and is characterised in the period between the end of the war (1945) and the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957 (which established the creation of the European Community). Delanty argues that the embedded rationale was that if national economies were linked, peace would continue to prevail. Therefore in this frame, Europe 'works' but only as a trade area in which most issues are dealt with nationally

⁷¹ The term 'postnationalism' seems to have been borrowed from Habermas (1988; 1992) who argued that postnational European societies emerge through trans-European public sphere's which encourage political debate. In this instance, a postnational EU would facilitate debate around European issues.

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but may be postnationally *steered*. Oldham Athletic fan (17) utilised this frame by arguing that the movement will continue to be successful as long as it primarily functions as an economic market. This means that other 'affairs' will be kept 'internal' within member states. The next frame will build upon this idea by demonstrating the argument that full political harmonisation of EU states is not necessary for political success.

Full harmonisation is not necessary

This frame highlights the view that complete political harmonisation is not necessary for a successful EU to develop. Whilst this view underlay many of the assumptions embedded within the previous frame, it was only explicitly referred to once. Oldham Athletic fan (7) gives this example:

There is no reason why everything should be harmonised before we join the Euro, and hence I don't agree that we'll necessarily lose jobs. So long as there's fiscal restraint we're ok, i.e. no particular country is going mad spending too much. But you're right on one thing, there needs to be reform on the ECB before we join I think; they're not particularly transparent in their actions, and they're far too detached from politicians to be useful; on both counts the Bank of England is far better; also our target is symmetric around 2%, whereas theirs is below 2%, which gives a lot more potential for deflation, which isn't good.

It is also nonsense to argue that the whole eurozone has to pay the same tax; this is patently not true. So long as each member doesn't overstep the mark and get into huge deficits, the whole system can work quite fine. Differences in tax might become more apparent when the same currency is in place, but that is then, and it doesn't imply all taxes must be the same. If the continentals want a more comprehensive social security system than we do, that's fine so long as taxation in those areas covers it.

There's certainly no need for everybody to get the same wage in every part of the eurozone, that's a jump you've made that has no backing; there's no logic that links it. Bus drivers in Newcastle don't get what they get in London do they? Certainly we all do our own thing, but given we've done it in the pound zone for hundreds of years and we aren't all one homogenous people, means surely the same thing won't happen with the eurozone, and no economics implies there has to be homogeneity.

Oldham Athletic fan (7) (5th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (7) convincingly articulates that all national social policies do not need to be harmonised before the UK adopts the euro currency. For instance, he argues that each nation in the eurozone would not have to pay the same, as state social security systems do not necessarily have to be harmonised. Oldham Athletic fan (7) then implies a return to a previously stated frame, by deconstructing the national system to show regional disparities in wages. He argues that the same can be applied to a European system, inferring that he sees 'Europe' as an imagined political community. However, intrinsic to this argument, Oldham Athletic fan (7) does see difficulties in the European Central Bank (ECB)⁷² which he argues is not entirely transparent and should follow the Bank of England's lead regarding inflation. The depth of Oldham Athletic fan (7)'s knowledge regarding the euro is particularly significant given that King (2000; 2003) sees problems in his Manchester United fans' use of the terms 'Europhile' and 'Eurosceptic' partially on account of their lack of knowledge relating to monetary union. However this is clearly not a problem for Oldham Athletic fan (7), who articulates a sound understanding of fiscal policy. However, given the small number of comments and the football-themed nature of the messageboard, it is impossible to say whether these results can be generalised to the wider group of Oldham Athletic supporters.

Federalism might be desirable

Wiener and Diez (2004) argue that political and social scientists can only speculate about the ultimate goal of the European integration movement. Therefore they

⁷² The European Central Bank (ECB) was established on 1st June 1998 in order to regulate monetary union across the EU.

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consider that in the early 1990s the uncertainty surrounding the idea of a constitution-based federal Europe 'spelt political death'. Yet, this may no longer be case with the constitutionalisation of the Treaties now an accepted policy objective (Wiener and Diez *ibid*: 237-8; see also Habermas 2001).

The final secondary frame within the affirmative pro-European integration master cluster communicates that a federal Europe might be desirable. As considered, the issue of federalism in Europe has proved to be a thorny issue in British integration politics (Gowland and Turner 2000). However, it is apparent that this view is not entirely shared across Europe with EU Commissioner and former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing fervently supporting the idea of a federal Europe. Black (2002) points out that Giscard d'Estaing proposed that the EU should be rebranded as 'United Europe' or the 'United States of Europe' whilst he was assisting the draft of the 2003 stalled constitution. Additionally, Article One of the draft stated that the EU should become 'a union of European states which, while retaining their national identities, closely coordinate their policies at the European level, and administer certain common competences on a federal basis'. Although the constitution was rejected, this clearly illustrates the federalist drive which Giscard d'Estaing favours (Black 2002).

In the sample just one Oldham Athletic supporter argued that federalism might be desirable, although this comment was tinged with a cynical, anti-integration undertone:

I do not believe it can be of use to us unless taxation, social services, and prices are the same throughout the Euro Zone, and the economies are working on the same cycle. The British economy is very different to the economies in the Euro zone, and I

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do not see it being electorally possible to sell to the British public (or the French and German) the idea that they should accept taxation, benefits, and health care should all be decided by unelected commissioners in Europe.

Oldham Athletic fan (18) (5th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (18) is communicating that if the Euro is to prove successful, it needs full political and economic harmonisation, which could only be developed by a European federal state. However, Oldham Athletic fan (18) hints that it may be better to abandon the integration process, rather than move to these levels. In this way, the use of the frame, which may have offered the greatest potential to develop a pro-European political consciousness, provides more of a warning that the project may malfunction.

AFFIRMATIVE ANTI-EUROPEAN INTEGRATION FRAMES

The second master frame covers the affirmative ideas that are opposed to European integration. Table 5.04 illustrates that there were six secondary patterns of discourse within this large frame. For Oldham Athletic supporters the most heavily utilised frame argued that the EU needs a better democratic structure, whilst for Liverpool fans it was that the integration movement should not interfere with the internal workings of sport. This section will further explore affirmative anti European integration frames.

The EU causes immigration

This frame touches upon the central themes within the last chapter by considering the 'problem' of immigration. In the wider society, this frame was not explicitly linked by Oldham Athletic supporters to the idea of European integration, although, on one

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occasion, it was by Liverpool fan (29). Evidence of Liverpool fan (29)'s comment is below:

I'm telling you if all jobs in the UK were taken by cheaper foreign workers then you'll soon see restrictions on free labour in the EU...

Liverpool fan (29) (15th February 2005)

The significance of Liverpool fan (29)'s comment is that s/he currently saw the EU as facilitating 'foreign' integration, perhaps by the free movement ruling within the Maastricht Treaty, and subsequently s/he viewed the integration process as facilitating this. Therefore, it is Liverpool fan (29)'s argument that the EU can stop immigration, but chooses not to. The next frame moves away from this debate by arguing that the EU lacks coherent democratic structures

EU needs a better democratic structure

McNeil (2004: 13) postulates a popular argument that the EU is largely elite driven, by both Brussels-based civil service and national government ministers. This means that it is often not clear how the gap between European citizens and the political project can be bridged and there are growing concerns regarding the democratic deficit within the EU.⁷³ Indeed, only the EP is directly elected by citizens of the EU. This means that decisions made by the Council of Ministers,⁷⁴ the Commission⁷⁵ and the ECB may directly affect citizens' lives without any explicit degree of

⁷³ For further information, see Bourne (2003), Castells (1998), McDonald (1999) and Norris (1997).

⁷⁴ Villes (2001: 25-6) points out that the European Council brings together its ministers (comprised of ministers from each member state) at least twice a year in order to review and enact EU laws, that are suggested by the European Commission, in order to strike a balance between national and EU interests.

⁷⁵ Villes (2001: 26) describes the European Commission as the 'policy engine of the EU'. The Commission, comprised of two members from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom, and one each from the other EU member states, provides the legislation, is responsible for administration and ensures that the provisions of the treaties and the decisions of the institutions are properly implemented. The commissioners act solely in the EU's interest in that they are independent of the national governments that nominated them.

accountability. McDonald (1999: 22) argues that this has led to calls to further increase the powers of the EP in relation to the other institutions within the EU. However, if this were to happen, future EP elections would have to demand greater voting turnouts than those in June 2004, although if this developed, the governmental structures would offer greater potential to be shown to be accountable. This frame was evident nine times amongst Oldham Athletic supporters and was the most popular frame in this category. One such example of this is proved by Oldham Athletic fan (19):

Pulling out of Europe is not something I would want or advocate but the current undemocratic, corrupt organisation is very difficult to defend. That reminds me the real Nazi's were socialists too. They were elected because of their populist measures such as free health care and holidays. Then they went and killed all those nice people. Perhaps I am on my way to becoming a Nazi.

Oldham Athletic fan (19) (5th June 2004)

Thus, Oldham Athletic fan (19) compares the EU to the Nazi party, in that s/he sees both movements as trying to wholly take over Europe using undemocratic means. Fan (19) has undoubtedly drawn upon a large degree of hyperbole to make his/her point although the argument is that the integration movement is centrally authoritarian and lacking clear democratic legitimacy. Such criticisms of the EU are not uncommon and a policy of 'subsidiarity' has been developed to counter such disapprovals (Rumford 2000). Subsidiarity refers to the shift of decision making processes to move away from central national or European structures to 'the appropriate level, and not always from above' (McNeil 2003: 72). This has given support to regional movements – often composed of those who are fervently opposed to nation state systems (in a more accentuated way than Liverpool fans were to the idea of Englishness in Chapter Three) – who seek greater degrees of regional

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autonomy under the umbrella of a successful EU (Rumford 2000; Delanty and Rumford 2005). However, Oldham Athletic fan (18) does not see subsidiarity sufficing such criticisms:

The point I made is that you can't allow for all these differences unless you go the whole hog. The whole zone must pay the same tax and receive the same benefits. This also means a bus driver getting the same pay in Paris as well as Dublin. I think that is a great idea if you have a truly independent ECB and a truly democratic European Parliament.

Now tell me how we sell that to people. Even in this country the Welsh, Irish and Scottish want to do their own thing. The Basques want to do their own thing. I cannot think of arguments that would convince the majority that this is a good idea. The challenge for you is to find the way to convince them.

Oldham Athletic fan (18) (5th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (18) clearly envisages the EU as trying to create a homogeneous Europe, when the semi-autonomous principalities which he mentions 'want to do their own thing'. However, Oldham Athletic fan (18) fails to consider the role of the European 'Committee of the Regions', which was developed in 1994 to give a voice to disparate regions that have been politically and culturally oppressed by their nation-states. Rumford (2000) feels that this has redressed many legitimate political imbalances in the EU, a view that Oldham Athletic fan (18) fails to share. The next frame negatively addresses the issue of European federalism.

Federalism would be bad

This frame is the inverse of 'federalism might be desirable' found under the 'affirmative pro-European integration' master frame. In the academic literature, Weiler (1999) has argued that an EU federal goal would be undesirable for the integration project and that national systems of governance/identities would prohibit

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immediate deepening to this level. So, whilst the French EU Commissioner, Giscard d'Estaing aggressively backed plans to federalise the EU, others have been less keen. Indeed, Gowland and Turner (2000) have pointed out that UK politicians have been opposed to almost every advance toward federalism. Hence, whilst Winston Churchill called for a 'United States of Europe' in 1946, his idea seemed to be more akin to the idea of political stability growing from European economic markets rather than the handing over of decision making to a pan-European political mechanism. Further, Gowland and Turner (2000) argue that this tentative attitude first reared in 1948, three years before the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), as the British Labour government boycotted The Hague Congress of Europe fearing that the large gathering of European public figures would prove to be a precursor to a federal movement. Gowland and Turner's (2000) argument is that this attitude has continued to prevail into the contemporary era, pointing out that for instance, in May 1998, Britain stood on the edge of proceedings as other EU members agreed to advance toward deepened economic and monetary union with the introduction of the euro single currency (adopted in January 1999). Similarly, former Conservative cabinet member Michael Heseltine declared that 'for Britain's sake I am a European' by inadvertently backing Milward's (1992) argument that European integration strengthens national economies. Therefore, whilst on the surface level, Heseltine's rhetoric appeared to be pro-European, his message was 'traditionally British' in that he was fervently opposed to the type of integration which would mean the handing over of sovereign powers to a European super-state. This message resonated with Oldham Athletic fan (7) who argued:

With regards Europe, there are certain decisions which can never be taken at a European level, and I believe never will be.

Oldham Athletic fan (7) (6th June 2004)

By implication, this comment is consistent with the affirmative pro-European integration frame which argued that Europe functioned well as an economic area. However, in this case, he is opposed to the idea of a federal Europe, by stating that 'certain decisions ... can never be taken at a European level'. This stance is anti-federal because under such rule, all decision making processes would have to be made at the European level (with local consultation). The next frame returns to the fission between sport and politics by demonstrating the argument that the European integration movement should not interfere with sport.

EU politics should not interfere with sport

The comments in this frame specifically address the Bosman ruling (see Chapter Four) and the 'transfer window' through the direct impact that the European institutions have had upon professional football. The last cluster of secondary frames did not show support for the Bosman ruling, as a direct impact of the Europeanisation of English club football and this frame illustrates firm criticisms. This pattern of discourse accounted for two Liverpool fans' comments in this domain and featured six times amongst the Oldham Athletic cohort. Indeed, Liverpool fan (35) argued '[i]n the immortal words of Al Murray Pub Landlord, "Back Off Brussels"' (3rd February 2005) to denigrate the effects of the Bosman. However, the impending transfer window, which was already implemented in the Premiership and allowed clubs to only buy and sell players 1st June-31st August and the whole of January caused concern to Oldham Athletic supporters. One example is provided by Oldham Athletic fan (20):

No need to worry the transfer window cannot be implemented because it is in breach of Article 81 of the EC Treaty. Now I don't normally favour the EU interfering with sport, but on this I make an exception, so I am e-mailing the commission immediately so that they can step in and get it all sorted prior to the new season. Suggest all other fans do likewise. At least they will be doing something useful.

Oldham Athletic fan (20) (29th January 2005)

The comments illustrate a contrast between the two fans. Whilst Liverpool fan (35) attacks the impacts of the European institutions by quoting a remark from the popular television sitcom, 'Al Murray: Pub Landlord', Oldham Athletic supporter (20), while not 'normally favour[ing] the EU interfering with sport' challenges his ruling through Article 81 of the EC Treaty. This demonstrates a deeper European legal/political consciousness for the given Oldham Athletic supporter. However, Oldham Athletic fan (20) has failed to recognise that the EU has a record for regarding football as a 'special case' (Greenfield and Osborn 2001: 2) and such is allowed unofficial remission on such rulings. The next frame moves away from sport to argue that European integration is not desirable because Britain is not culturally European.

British not 'European'

As previously explored, Britain has historically endured a difficult relationship with the European integration movement. This has helped to foster a frame in which it is argued that the UK is not conventionally 'European'.

Bryant (2006: 260) demonstrates how this frame has been embedded within the British political imagination, by pointing out that following the Nazi invasion of Sudetenland (1938) the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain publicly described Czechoslovakia as a 'far away country about which we know little'. This

attitude has continued in the contemporary era with current Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown trying to 'sell' the idea of the Euro currency arguing that 'we [the UK] have been linked to Europe by geography, history and economics' (*The Guardian* 2004) and in doing so, continued to stress the difference of the UK to the rest of Europe.⁷⁶ Indeed, Kumar (2003; 2004) has also illustrated a further dimension in the 'detachment' thesis. He argues that the policies of Prime Ministers from Margaret Thatcher to Tony Blair have clearly demonstrated British Eurosceptics' 'uneasy pivot' between Europe and America (Kumar 2003: 16). Additionally, according to Bryant (2006: 269-73), the Eurobarometer survey has shown that this attitude has resonated with the British public, who see their country as detached from Europe. Yet, despite this, when affirmative anti-European integration speech patterns were mobilised, this frame was surprisingly only used once by Oldham Athletic fans in the political context (although Chapter Three illustrates that in the purely cultural sense the frame was regularly utilised). This offered by Oldham Athletic fan (21), who argued

I don't think this could run a long way, it isn't traditionally a Swiss mentality to do things for others. EU? They're worse than the UKIP!

Oldham Athletic fan (21) (17th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (21) is arguing that the EU has taken on a 'Swiss mentality' which, for an unexplained reason, makes it worse than the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). In talking about a 'Swiss mentality', Oldham Athletic fan (21) is invoking an 'ethno-difference' frame (see Rydgren 2003; 2004 and Chapter Four) and in general, his logic is difficult to fathom. However, the significant

⁷⁶ Brown was arguing that the UK was 'linked to' rather than 'part of' Europe.

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point is that he argues that he is opposed to the EU because it represents a different cultural position to that of the UK. In this way, Oldham Athletic fan (21) is arguing that to be British is not to be European.

EU is faceless

The final frame in this section is one which stresses that the EU is 'faceless'. This frame has been developed from existing schematas which have suggested that the EU is undemocratic and that the imagined political community does not include non-British Europeans. This is a powerful anti-European frame, but has only been utilised by Oldham Athletic fan (18) when he communicated 'I'm off out to spend some euros on foreign lager served by faceless eurocrats' (5th June 2004). The next set of frames will counter the arguments of this master frame by offering remedial pro-European voices.

REMEDIAL PRO-EUROPEAN INTEGRATION FRAMES

The third master frame includes patterns of discourse which provide support for the integration movement through negating real and perceived criticism of the project. Table 5.05 illustrates that there were four secondary patterns of discourse within this large frame. For Oldham Athletic supporters the most heavily utilised frame was the idea that European integration does not lead to unemployment. No Liverpool fan comments were given in this master frame. This section will further explore the remedial, pro-integration frames.

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European integration does not cause unemployment

This frame provided a defence to the idea that European integration, and most explicitly the euro currency, would cause an increase in national unemployment as there is an assumption that 'replacing the pound would mean interest rates, taxes, and public spending controlled in Frankfurt and Brussels' (*BBC Politics 2001*). The anti-integration argument is that this 'distance', which does not take into account subsidiarity, would mean higher unemployment and lower living standards. In defence of this opinion, *Eurostat* (2006) points out that at the end of 2005, unemployment rates in the Eurozone stood at 8.4 per cent. This unfavourably compared to UK, which averaged at 4.9 per cent. This point acknowledged, unemployment rates are intrinsically complex so there may be multiple reasons for these disparities (strength of national economy etc). Three comments were framed in this way. Oldham Athletic fan (7) provides one example:

First the Euro hasn't necessarily caused unemployment, since it's only been in place a few years. I don't like using this argument, as it fosters the idea we should all become more like America, but one factor I would suggest is causing unemployment is the high levels of taxation on firms and workers in the Euro area that is causing the unemployment.

Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary have very high rates of unemployment but they're not in true Euro zone. And if you're going to suggest that their problems are different because they came out of Communism only 15 years ago, well so did half of Germany, and that's contributing in large proportion to their current troubles.

Oldham Athletic fan (7) (5th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (7) is communicating that the euro has not necessarily caused unemployment because its lifespan is not long enough to fully gauge the effects. He further argues that other reasons may be affecting these rates because there is also high unemployment in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, who are not part of

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eurozone. Therefore, one Oldham Athletic supporter was prepared to defend the impacts of the Euro currency on national employment rates.

Euro currency does not create national economic problems

Similarly, a small number of Oldham Athletic fan comments also defended the euro's impact upon the strength of national economies. An example is provided by Oldham Athletic fan (22):

A lot of commentators are blaming stuff on the euro that simply aren't its fault. Germany does need reflating, but its inability to do so cannot be laid solely at the door of its participation in the euro zone. The small matter of reunification has really stuffed them up good and proper. France's problems, although being blamed on the euro, are almost totally as a result of its crippling social policies and the almost Kafkaesque bureaucracy that stifles any real entrepreneurial spirit.

Oldham Athletic fan (22) (5th June 2004)

Following the political argument of Oldham Athletic fan (7), it is fan (22)'s intention to communicate that the weak economic strength of some European nations is not necessarily due to the euro but other extraneous reasons.

EU does not create immigration

The third secondary frame embedded within the master remedial pro-European frame is the discourse that integration creates immigration. As pointed out in Chapter Four, immigration in the wider society is often viewed by the ERP/RRP as an opportunity to seize public attention by framing immigrants as problematic (Rydgren 2003; 2004).

Although discourse within this frame does not explicitly argue that immigrants are not a social problem, it somewhat counters the overall argument by suggesting that the

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EU does not increase immigration.⁷⁷ This frame was only utilised by Oldham Athletic fan (23), who stated that '[t]here are more UK emigrants than immigrants and we don't even know what bearing the EU has had on the incomers' (5th June 2004).

EU immigrants are not draining the state

Having made this point, Oldham Athletic fan (23) later reinforced it with a new, associated frame, as he suggested that 'immigrants' from new EU states are not claiming state benefits, in the way that Rydgren (2003; 2004) stated the ERP/RRP are arguing that they 'drain the state'. The comment which fits this frame is given below:

Immigrants from the new EU nations cannot claim benefits for not working. Asylum seekers do get benefits, but then again it wouldn't be very nice to expect people who have had to flee their homes under threat of death to get here and starve (they're mostly not allowed to work). If you're concerned about false asylum or benefit fraud, you'd better pay more tax for the investigation of these things.

Oldham Athletic fan (23) (6th June 2004)

By making this comment, Oldham Athletic fan (23) inadvertently recreates Soysal's (1994) argument that a complete model of social citizenship does not yet exist in the EU.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The chapter results have indicated that in the context of a football messageboard, Oldham Athletic fans are more likely to discuss European politics than Liverpool supporters. Neither group of fans are overwhelmingly pro or anti European integration, as Liverpool supporters were when trans-European football was taken as a proxy for Europe in Chapter Three. Yet the fact that Oldham Athletic fans have

⁷⁷ For additional debate, see Faist (2000) and Kraus and Schwager (2004).

debated political integration demonstrates some level of a European consciousness. Although there have been a small number of Liverpool supporter comments which have alluded to the EU, this does not mask the fact that these are comparatively rare and suggests that their political concerns lie away from the European institutions.

Within each of the master frames, it is difficult to argue that there is an objective order of frames which show the strength of political loyalties. This is consistent with Lepsius' (2001) argument that the *idea* of the EU is altered by individual epistemological positions. Therefore, in much the same way as *Europe* has multiple definitions; the EU does not mean the same to all people (see Chapter One).

However, without wishing to impose a solid frame hierarchy, it seems likely that within the affirmative pro-European master frame, the idea that European integration assists consumerism is likely to be less significant than fan debate about the merits of the EU as a trade area. Given that Liverpool fans have mobilised this frame, it is easy to argue that their discourse is less frequent and carries weaker authority in the European context. However, during the sample period, a second party political debate emerged which potentially may be interesting in the light of these results and the local socio-political contexts of Oldham and Liverpool. This largely emerged concerning debates around the BNP and will now be considered.

LOCAL POLITICAL DEBATE AND THE BNP

Chapter Two detailed that the BNP have significantly greater local presence in Oldham than Liverpool and data in Table 5.06 largely reflects this pattern. Having a lower profile in Liverpool than Oldham, the BNP did not prompt any debate with the former, but accounted for 52 comments from the latter. Once again, this did not mean

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that Liverpool fans had an apolitical consciousness, as they were prepared to critically discuss the Labour Party, UKIP and, particularly, the Conservative Party. However, given the limited *threat* of the BNP in Liverpool, they were much more likely to voice a dislike of Conservative Party MP Boris Johnson, prompted by his comments that people from Liverpool revel in 'wallowing in victim status' (*BBC Politics* 2004).

This followed on from a pre-existing dislike of the Conservative Party, whose policies had not proved to be beneficial to the city throughout the 1980s and the way in which Bernard Ingham, the press secretary to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, had blamed Liverpool fans for the Hillsborough disaster. Chapter Three explores how this helped to create a detachment from a cultural notion of 'Englishness', which ultimately provided the historical bedrock to assist the appeal of Europe amongst Liverpool fans. This highlights that 'threatening enemies' are not uniform, but particular to the standpoint of individuals and social groups. In the case of Oldham Athletic fans' political threat predominately came from the BNP. As previously stated, BNP threat is most prevalent in elections in which electoral turnouts are low. Local and EP elections provide two such examples and for this reason the potential link between the two dominant themes in this chapter was pronounced.

However, unlike the Conservative Party in Liverpool, the BNP, despite taking on a pressure rather than a mainstream party position, has significant support in Oldham. This means that data in Table 5.06 shows that whilst 73.08 per cent of all Oldham Athletic fan comments are opposed to the BNP, 26.92 per cent were supportive. However, the way in which support can be framed needs to be elaborated. To do this, four master frames were devised. These were: an affirmative pro-BNP frame, which illustrated clear, primary reasons why the BNP should be supported; an affirmative

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anti-BNP frame, which illustrated clear, primary reasons why the BNP should not be supported; a remedial pro-BNP frame, which responded to affirmative anti-BNP criticisms with a defence, and last, a remedial anti-BNP frame which responded to affirmative pro-BNP criticisms with a defence of anti-BNP stance. Of the four master frames, three were utilised, with no comments fitting the remedial anti-BNP bracket. By far the most heavily utilised BNP master frame was the affirmative anti-BNP frame, which accounted for 73.08 per cent of all comments. The affirmative and remedial pro-BNP frames each accounted for 13.46 per cent of BNP comments in the sample. The next section of the chapter will demonstrate the secondary frames which composed each of the master frames. As in the previous section, the incidence of comment occurrence is used when looking at the spread of secondary frames within the master frames because relatively few party-political comments were made on the two football messageboards.

AFFIRMATIVE PRO-BNP FRAMES

Table 5.08 illustrates that there were two secondary frames drawn from the affirmative pro-BNP master frame. The most popular was of these amongst Oldham Athletic supporters was that the BNP has legitimate policies. This section will further elaborate the use of the secondary frames to support the master frame.

Legitimate policies

Four Oldham Athletic fans comments utilised a frame which argued that the BNP produced legitimate and 'commonsense' policies. Oldham Athletic fan (17) provides an example of one way this frame was utilised:

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I do believe that there has to be an end to the current numbers of immigrants entering our country and being able to claim of our benefit system. I was watching i think it was a program called final word where they had a woman who had come from Poland with her perants when she was around 2 or 3. She stated that her parents had to earn their money, not like many of the immigrants who receive benefit from tax payers.

They want a move back to normal and get rid of the trendy teaching methods. I agree with this as a family member is in the education system and has a successful school run off the traditional methods. HOWEVER, giving teachers the right to use canes etc. again is not the answer tradition 3 R's is.

Oldham Athletic fan (17) (4th June 2004)

With this comment, Oldham Athletic fan (17) is championing the BNP's proposed policies. Given the way Rydgren (2003; 2004) argues that the ERP/RRP frame immigration, it is not surprising that Oldham Athletic fan (17) cites the BNP's stance on immigration as one of their key policies. In this respect, Oldham Athletic fan (17) uses the 'economic drain' frame (see Chapter Four) to legitimate the BNP's anti-immigration position. Second, Oldham Athletic fan (17) backs the BNP's education policy, which advocates a return to the traditional methods of teaching the basic scholarship skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. It is worth pointing out that neither the BNP nor Oldham Athletic fan (17) explicitly details how this will be achieved. The next way in which the affirmative pro-BNP master frame was utilised was through the claim that the party invoked a sense of patriotism.

Invoke patriotism

The second frame that supported the BNP was one which claimed they could invoke a sense of national patriotism, which had disappeared in a multicultural age of population movement. This discourse was used three times. An example of the utilisation of this frame is provided by Oldham Athletic fan (23):

I'm a BNP supporter but look at me, i aint racist i just want a better Britain for our people who died to make Britain great. I want Tony Blair to be kicked out of Britian for what he has done to our country and i want everyone else kicked out who try to mess our country up. Be proud to be British, be BNP!

Oldham Athletic fan (23) (12th September 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (23) is trying to communicate that the BNP have instilled a sense of national pride into his actions, which he argues is immensely positive. Underlying this sense of pride is possibly a defence from accusations that the BNP have racist members/ideologies, yet, this is not made explicit in this frame, therefore justifying the comments position within the affirmative pro-BNP frame.

AFFIRMATIVE ANTI-BNP FRAMES

Table 5.09 illustrates that there were five secondary frames drawn from the affirmative pro-BNP master frame. The most popular was of these with Oldham Athletic supporters was that BNP has an illegitimate ideology. This section will further elaborate the use of the secondary frames to support the master frame.

Illegitimate ideology

The frame which argued that the BNP are founded upon illegitimate ideologies proved to be the most prominent secondary frame within the master affirmative anti-BNP discourse field, accounting for 17 comments. Ideology, in this circumstance, was judged to be an enduring culture which shapes the thoughts and actions of individual members. Oldham Athletic fan (24) provides a powerful example of how his fellow fans may have chosen to reject the BNP on ideological grounds:

Nick Griffin says the holocaust is a lie. The leader of the B.N.P is a holocaust denier. What kind of person says/believes that bilge? The B.N.P is full of Nazi sympathisers, the B.N.P is their 'mainstream' vehicle - at last they can play at election politics. How anyone can say that this is merely incidental and is up there with Conservative MP's being homosexuals for example is a complete oaf. Am I allowed to call you an oaf or is that unfair on oafs?

Speaking of my unspeakable attack on retards by calling you one. If the B.N.P ever came to power (yeah right, but lets suspend belief for a second) then they would happily sterilise the mentally handicapped. I talk rot you say - well go and speak to Tony Lecomber - did he not advocate " a racially purer Britain through sterilisation of the poor, the sick and the disabled".

The same Mr Lecomber is the man who called old Adolf a 'peace loving man' and Churchill a 'warmongering drunken slob'.

These are not isolated views are very common place within this so called democratic party.

Most people will have heard of C18 who are unashamed, out and out Nazis. They dont hide from the fact unlike the B.N.P which cannot of course or else it would lose itself much of its votes. Was not C18 set up by the B.N.P? Yes it was.

David Copeland, the nail bomber, was a member of the B.N.P. What's that got to do with anything you argue? Yes, I know followers of all parties are guilty of murder but how many of them do it because of the party they are members of? Copeland had his beliefs nurtured as a rank and file member of the B.N.P and stated after his arrest that he wanted to spark off race riots so that people would go out and vote B.N.P.

How many other UK parties do you know where members go out and kill people so that their parties may get extra votes?

The B.N.P tries to present itself as a radical right-wing political party that is merely concerned about immigration and crime. However, the B.N.P is not really a legitimate political party in the same sense as other political parties. A combination of political violence, rewriting of history and unscientific race "theory" makes the B.N.P a fascist organisation.

Oldham Athletic fan (24) (19th September 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (24) is vividly elaborating the ideological similarities between the BNP and the Nazi Socialist Party of pre-World War II Germany. The basis of this comes from two particular sources, first, Renton (2004: 84) argues that many of the BNP's supporters are long standing neo-Nazi's with connections pre-dating the 1970s and second, the explicit links between neo-Nazi group 'Combat 18' (C18) and the BNP. C18 are widely considered to be ideologically close to the Nazi Socialist

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Party, indeed, from their title, the number 18 represents A and H, the first and eighth letters of the alphabet, in homage to Adolf Hitler. The C18 link to the BNP is that they have the official capacity of the party's 'security force' by protecting meetings and allegedly intimidating political opponents (Taylor 2004). The next frame moves from this by demonstrating how some Oldham Athletic fans have denigrated the BNP by arguing that they do not have legitimate policies.

Illegitimate policies

The next secondary frame, which was used 7 times, denigrates the BNP on account of illegitimate policies. This is typically conferred by Oldham Athletic fan (25):

The comment was made on the Nicky Campbell Five live programme during the last general election. Heard it myself and nearly crashed the car. I appreciate that they are listed as a political party, but in reality, they aren't one. They have one policy only (the rest of their "policy" statements regarding council tax for instance, or a myriad of other subjects are only there to make Sun and Daily Mail reading people who are too stupid to know any better vote for them.

Oldham Athletic fan (25) (4th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (25) is suggesting that the BNP are not a political party on account of his perception that they only have one strong policy. Predictably, given Rydgren's (2003; 2004) analysis of the European ERP/RRP, this centres upon the policy of repatriating 'immigrants' which creates the façade of the BNP as legitimate political party when this is not the case given their lack of additional policies.

Illegitimate manipulation of voters

The third frame that is used to communicate affirmative anti-BNP sentiment stresses that the BNP manipulate citizens into voting for them. This frame was drawn upon 10

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times. Oldham Athletic fan (6) provides an example of how this idea was communicated:

Organisations like the B.N.P. rely on impressionable young people like you to swell their ranks to try and give themselves some respectability. Read some stuff about them, compare with history, and I hope you will change your mind. Don't be fooled, that's all I have to say.

Oldham Athletic fan (6) (12th September 2004).

Whilst Oldham Athletic fan (6) is serving a warning that the BNP manipulate impressionable people into giving their support, he does not stipulate how this might be achieved. Oldham Athletic fan (7) begins to elaborate this:

On immigration, the "facts" we're told are usually crap the Daily Mail has dreamt up. The numbers of them in the country is tiny, and certain people with certain agendas have whipped up the current hysteria to something bordering on xenophobia, and something that's certainly very selfish. You'll find they'd rather work for that money also, if you asked the ones who have managed to somehow get benefits (and that mobile phone the BNP laughably talk about).

Oldham Athletic fan (7) (6th June 2004)

The inherent message communicated by Oldham Athletic fan (7) is that the BNP attach themselves to the existing schemata created by the right-wing print media in order to promote their xenophobic ideologies. Given that Oldham Athletic fan (7) feels that such 'facts' have been 'dreamt up' he believes that the public are illegitimately manipulated.

'Bad' individual members

The fourth frame that is used to affirm the rejection of the BNP stresses that some party members have unsavoury dispositions (Renton 2005: 28). This frame was used three times. Offering support, BNP member Oldham Athletic fan (23) admitted he

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knew 'some of the B.N.P are racist and people like that shouldn't be in the B.N.P'
(12th September 2004).

Illegitimate use of slogans

The final secondary frame in this section is consistent with the previous argument that the BNP manipulate voters, in this case suggesting that they illegitimately use misleading slogans. This frame was mobilised only once. However, it was used by Oldham Athletic fan (26) who gave the following communication:

In what sense can the B N P call themselves the 'people's party'? Given that the B N P is very far from being the majority party in this country, and given the widespread outrage at many of their policies, what is their justification for claiming that they are, indeed, the 'party of the people'?

Oldham Athletic fan (26) (4th June 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (26) is arguing that the BNP inappropriately term themselves the 'people's party', which he is uncomfortable with because it alludes to an idea that they are a mainstream party, which they are not. To support this, residents of Oldham West and Royton gave the BNP their highest ever national parliamentary vote in the 2001 election but this still only provided the party with 16.4 per cent of the overall ballot. This beat the Liberal Democrats into third place in this constituency, but did not gain a seat in parliament. If the BNP were truly the 'people's party', it might be fair to suggest that they might have seized a number of seats, if not overall national political ascendancy. The next set of secondary frames fall under the umbrella of the remedial pro-BNP master frame.

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REMEDIAL PRO-BNP FRAME

The final discourse cluster considers how Oldham Athletic fans demonstrated support for the BNP party by countering perceived criticisms (which may form part of the affirmative anti-BNP master frame). Data in Table 5.07 shows that this accounted for 13.46 per cent of all comments referring to the BNP, which is the same proportion as affirmative pro-BNP discourse and significantly smaller than affirmative anti-BNP frames. Inside this master frame there were four secondary frames, with the principle that the BNP are not ideologically incorrect the most significant frame (see Table 5.10).

Legitimate ideology

This frame provided the counter argument to the illegitimate ideology frame (previous section) and was used three times. This frame was specifically defending the idea that the BNP carried a prevailing racist culture. However, Oldham Athletic fan (27) defended the BNP from this accusation by arguing that 'Were not racist, we just don't like anyone not from round here' (13th September 2004). By making this point, Oldham Athletic fan (27) seems to be differentiating between racism and xenophobia, an issue which was addressed in Chapter One. However, despite arguing that the BNP preferred 'people from around here', this proved not to be the case in that white British people were assumed to be within their 'imagined community'. In this respect locality was not as significant as the perception of 'British blood' (c.f. Smith 1992). Furthermore, it is also significant that Oldham Athletic fan (27) does not see cultural racism (which xenophobia is a part of) as a legitimate form of racism, which he implies is solely based upon ethnic characteristics. According to Rydgren (2004) the failure to recognise and critique the conventional views of racism are typical within

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ERP/RRP movements. This has attracted criticism from the political left and centre of society who have drawn similarities between the ERP/RRP and Hitler's Nazi-Socialist Party (as was illustrated by Oldham Athletic fan (24) earlier in this chapter). However, BNP followers are generally keen to refute such allegations to avoid such negative connotations. An example of this is provided by Oldham Athletic fan (23):

Right did Hitler start the B.N.P?, Do the B.N.P go round with an nazi stuff at all?, did any of the B.N.P members ever fight for the nazis?

Oldham Athletic fan (23) (12th September 2004)

This comment illustrates the ideological difference which BNP supporters stress between their party and that of the Nazi Socialist Party. Significantly, rather than actually stress ideological difference between the two political organisations, Oldham Athletic fan (23) believes that because BNP members neither wear 'Nazi stuff' nor have engaged in warfare on behalf of the party (the Second World War ended in 1945) the two parties cannot share similar ideologies. This argument seems to lack a coherent logic, but it is important to note that this is Oldham Athletic fan (23)'s perception, rather than a claim to 'objective reality'. The next frame shows how BNP supporters frame the BNP as gaining an unjust media profile.

Illegitimate media image

This frame illustrates the idea that the BNP are unfairly represented in the British media. This frame was mobilised by just one supporter comment, given by Oldham Athletic fan (27):

BNP are misquoted, but the Muslims are quoted word for word. That is exactly what that Muslin leader said. Of course that racist was booted out, it was not a PR stunt, with a load of spin, and there was no character assassination after.

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That is obvious to anyone.

Oldham Athletic fan (27) (13th September 2004)

The essence of Oldham Athletic fan (27)'s communication is that the BNP are frequently misquoted, whereas Muslims are not. This potentially represents an emergent ERP/RRP frame which has not been considered by Rydgren (2003; 2004), namely that the BNP illegitimately suffer from a poor media image. The next frame defends the allegation that the BNP have hijacked national symbols such as the flag of St. George.

Have not 'hijacked' national flags

The third secondary frame demonstrates discourse which defends the BNP from 'hijacking' national symbolism, such as national flags. This accounted for one comment, provided by Oldham Athletic fan (28):

Do not blame the BNP accusing them of hijacking the flag blame people like you who clearly have no pride in their country. I am also of the opinion that the BNP's hijacking of the flag is now over as more and more people show pride in the flag and the country it represents which is all the flag of St George does. It represents England and everything it stands for and more and more people are flying them

Oldham Athletic fan (28) (3rd January 2004)

Oldham Athletic fan (28) made this point in response to criticisms that the BNP have re-appropriated the meaning of the St. George's flag to become synonymous with the political right. On one hand, there may be logic to Oldham Athletic fan (28)'s argument – the Boy Scouts fly the Union Jack at parades with it becoming inherently connoted to them - but on the other, following the theoretical template of Blumer (1969) and the more substantive musings of Firth (1973), flags are symbols which can

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be interpreted in multiple ways. This means that for some social groups, the St. George's flag could become equated with the BNP, whilst for others it may not conjure this imagery in any way. The final secondary frame considers the right to free speech as a defence for the BNP.

Right to free speech

The final frame is illustrative of the idea that a healthy democracy is dependent upon a range of political views and that the BNP and its supporters, whilst not necessarily demonstrating accurate perspectives, are entitled to have their voice heard. This frame was used twice. Oldham Athletic fan (16) provides one example of how this was frame utilised:

For me, it is essential that even people with the most 'abhorrently' racist views are able to express them freely without condemnation. I realise that this produces a sort of paradox whereby one person's expression of their views afflicts another group's sensitivity, but if we are to have a truly 'tolerant' society then surely we must tolerate the intolerant?

While I don't think this issue is actually in debate here, I think it is important to discuss issues, even with people who hold bigoted views. I would like to think that even 'open minded', liberal people can have something to learn from racist people's views. It is as offensive to me when people become outraged by other people expressing their opinion as when people actually make the racist remarks.

Oldham Athletic fan (16) (4th June 2004)

The way Oldham Athletic fan (16) uses this frame is similar to the argument given in many of the liberal media following Nick Griffin's allegation that 'Islam is evil' and that the 'Qur'an allowed rape of non-Muslims' (Wainwright 2006). In this sense, the way Oldham Athletic fan (16) describes BNP views as abhorrent clearly suggests that he/she does not support the BNP, yet this comment backs the right of the BNP political voice, therefore providing a level of support.

VIEWING 'EUROPE' THROUGH THE LOCAL LENS?

On the basis of evidence collected within the sample, it would be difficult to argue that one socio-political issue had 'caused' the development of a European political consciousness. Indeed, this is likely to be the product of myriad of reasons which are embedded in the social fabric of Oldham. However, one important factor in this may be the local presence (and to many, the perceived threat) of the BNP. As discussed in Chapter Two, Oldham's recent political history has become notable due to the BNP and much of the EU debate emerged around the time of the June 2004 EP and local elections. This is possibly significant because minority parties like the BNP often prosper in European and local elections due to the low turnout levels (Muir 2004; Renton 2005). Renton (2005) argues that in Oldham, Griffin had been publicly boasting that the European election was 'a day to make history' because he was confident that his party could seize the local seat. On the surface it seemed as if Griffin's claims may have been justified: in the French elections of 1983, the Front National (FN) – who might be considered to be the French equivalent of the BNP – was able to win control of the town of Dreux. The following year, the FN went on to win 11 per cent of the EP vote and the party. The BNP anticipated that 8 or 9 per cent of the vote may win a European seat; yet this target was not met as the emergent UKIP took many of the potential BNP votes.⁷⁸ Yet, the reality is often not as important as the perception and it may have been such threats which helped to promote the discourse around the European elections. If this were true, it would be consistent with the findings of Van de Steeg and Risse (2003) who argued that a local threat of the far-Right helps to produce European political consciousnesses, by

⁷⁸ However Seabrook (2004) and Taylor (2004) point out that although the BNP failed to take any European Parliamentary power, the election still nationally produced 808 200 votes for their party. This accounted for 4.9 per cent of the national vote.

specifically looking at the example of the Haider case in Austria. Thus, the local presence of the BNP may have helped to foster a European political consciousness for Oldham Athletic supporters, but not Liverpool fans; certainly Oldham Athletic supporters discussed – with split opinions- the BNP in spring 2004. The sample of Oldham Athletic fans were not expected to be typical of the BNP movement in that it was pointed out in Chapter Two that several sociologists such as Back *et al.* (2001) and Haynes (1995) have suggested that fanzine contributors are often part of an anti-racist movement in football. Whilst it would be difficult to ‘prove’ this relationship (which is certainly not lineally causal) on the basis of such small sample numbers, the logic to this discussion potentially conjectures a link in so far as a group of Oldham Athletic supporters strongly backed the European political project and opposed the BNP. At the same time, many of those who, in principle, agreed with some dimensions of the BNP ideology (even if they were keen to distance themselves from the idea that they voted for the party) seemed to be opposed to the seemingly undemocratic and intensely bureaucratic nature of the EU and EP. Some of those who hinted that they strongly supported the BNP also seemed to be very aware of the EP (perhaps as a way in which their party can assert some degree of political control) and did support the EU on the condition that its competencies did not deepen or eat into national autonomies. In this case, Europe was seen as a way of furthering national interests. For the first group of these supporters, who were opposed to the BNP and supported the EU, it can be argued that the far-Right presence is conducive to an awareness of pan-European political debates. This may be as a means of denying the BNP any political power, given that Nick Griffin claimed that his party would seize control of Oldham’s local EP seats. Hence, although the BNP do often advocate that a withdrawal of British interest in the EU would be beneficial, the party are seen as a

threat through Europe, rather than explicitly a threat to Europe. In this sense, a very real perception of a political Europe – local seats in the EP – is situated within immediately experienced interests. Thus, it is possible to argue that, much like Liverpool fans perception of football's Europe (Chapter Three), the realities of Europe have been vividly viewed through the local lens.

CONCLUSION

When considering this chapter's results, it is recognised that there are unsurprisingly fewer comments given to political debates than the football orientated discussions in the previous two chapters. This means that the results are less clear, and perhaps, less authoritative. This caution is given because the significant results from this chapter are small enough to form minority opinions in Chapters Three and Four. In the introductory chapter, the critiques of sport's role in society by Chomsky (1983; 2004) Eco (1986), Adorno and Horkheimer (1992 [1944]) were detailed. If these criticisms proved to be entirely true, the results of this chapter may not exist at all as they argued that sports fans found it difficult to talk about anything but sport. As it stands, after the comments relating to football – which is, ultimately, the reason why football fans come together on an e-zine messageboard – political debate accounted for a relatively small number of comments, even despite the fact that Liverpool fans' political concerns did not appear to focus upon the EU.

The contribution of this chapter is to suggest that Oldham Athletic fans are demonstrating more evidence of a European political consciousness than Liverpool supporters. Whilst much identification through the cultural contexts of football in Chapters Three and Four probably reflected values held within the wider society, the

findings of this chapter are probably exclusively defined by issues emerging in the local urban contexts. This highlights the multifaceted nature of identification in that football fans have other dimensions to their identities than sports related loyalties. However, e-zine messageboard contributors' comments, like many paper fanzine articles, sometimes move beyond football to talk about other issues which are important to them. This has produced a turn toward politics and some Oldham Athletic supporters debated the competencies of the EU in June 2004. Much like Cerutti's (2003) argument that citizens fight against physical and ideological political threats, such as nuclear weapons, climate change and global mass culture is developing an awareness of the combative powers that EU institutions possess, the threat of the BNP in Oldham may have made some local fans aware of the competencies of the EU.

However, it is important to note that whereas both the Oldham Athletic and Liverpool fan groups largely shared an internal consensus in the issues which emerged in Chapters Three and Four, no such harmony was present on the issue of European politics. This is largely attributable to the fact that the performativity of coming together on an Internet football messageboard defines the tight knit group with respect to football allegiances (for instance, all regular fans on *JKL* support Oldham Athletic), the same is not exclusively true with political debate or party preference. This means that there was a minority of survey sample Oldham Athletic fans who were largely opposed to the EU. This polarises the European integration debate but if a European political consciousness is captured by a discursive awareness of the institutions, it is irrelevant whether people agree or disagree because only apathy erodes discussion. On the other hand, Liverpool fans did not discuss the EP/EU on their messageboard.

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Rather, they tend to concentrate upon trans-European consumerist issues which have been developed through fan travel. However, this is not to say that they are politically apathetic – for instance they have debated global political issues such as the war in Iraq – but the European integration movement is peripheral to their overall consciousness. Thus, the results presented in this chapter must be cautiously considered and only limited claims can be made on the basis of them.

In the next chapter I will bring together the results from this chapter along with those from Chapters Three and Four by reintroducing the notion of the *Super Club Network* in order to discuss the consistencies and discrepancies across and between the three representations of Europe identifications.

Chapter Six

THE SUPER CLUB NETWORK: THE CONTOURS AND CONTESTATIONS OF EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter brings together the findings in Chapters Three, Four and Five and, drawing upon the work of Manuel Castells (2004 [1997]), Pierre Bourdieu (2000 [1984]) and Zygmunt Bauman (1998; 2000; 2000a; 2001; 2004; 2005), explains the patterns and processes of identifications that were revealed. As discussed in Chapter Two, it is notoriously difficult to study collective identities/identifications because they have diverse impacts in almost every social situation and are therefore manifest in an infinite number of ways. This problem is reflected in the central themes of the previous three chapters which show different representations of *European identities/identifications*. Chapter Three, for example, shows that Liverpool fans displayed strong local attachments, in which English national identities were *othered*, alongside weaker European identifications. These were formed through positive fan experiences of trans-European football club competition. In contrast, Oldham Athletic fans exhibited strong national identities and saw the English national team as a way of venerating nationhood. This chapter examined one cultural dimension of European identification research by focusing on how citizens may/may not choose to identify with *Europe* (in this case European football). Chapter Four developed a second key theme in European identification research: the prevalence of xenophobic attitudes. Specifically, this chapter looked at whether some players are more likely to be accepted by fan groups on the grounds of their nationality. The results demonstrated that both xenophobic and cosmopolitan attitudes towards *others* are 'conditional'; when a team is successful, *foreign* players are more likely to be accepted than when results are less

impressive. Chapter Five examined an entirely different manifestation of European identifications by looking at the extent and nature of European political consciousness – defined as a knowledgeable awareness of EU institutions and a willingness to engage in political debate - amongst the two groups of supporters. The findings in this chapter were not entirely clear but, on the basis of the results, it seemed as if Oldham Athletic supporters were more likely than Liverpool fans to discuss the EP/EU (at least on a football-themed messageboard). It was speculated that one of a number of complex reasons for this may have been that the local presence of the BNP had sensitised Oldham Athletic fans to the threat to the EU that is posed by far-Right success in the EP. In this case the BNP may have become the *other* and liberal political consciousnesses may have, as a result, turned toward *Europe*. While this had not created a European *identification*, the process helped to develop an awareness of European institutions and voting patterns in the EU, the EP and the European Commission. Liverpool fans did not develop this political awareness in that it was resistance to Margaret Thatcher and the Conservative Party that had politicised the group (see Chapter Three). Indeed, Thatcher's policies were equated with what is perceived to be southern, middle class notions of Englishness, which Liverpool supporters strongly reject.

It is particularly interesting to consider the differences in these results. Chapters Three and Five highlighted two very different conceptualisations of Europe and show diverse outcomes. Liverpool fans, while showing an appetite for European football did not show the same concern for European politics, whereas, conversely, some Oldham Athletic fans showed a sound knowledge of European institutions but were not particularly excited by UEFA club competitions. While these identifications are not contradictory, they highlight the need for a multi-dimensional approach to defining Europe: both UEFA and the EU

operate as legitimate boundaries of *Europe* but, unsurprisingly, the same definitions are not employed. The fact that the same group of Liverpool fans who retold narratives about European football experience also showed xenophobic prejudices against *foreign* European football players is more contradictory. Indeed, intra-European xenophobic discourse was as freely aired as discrimination against non-Europeans as they spoke about football players. The data therefore suggests that there are discontinuities between representations of European identifications even within the cultural context of football. The issue of identification coherence defines the aim of this chapter, which is to understand, first, the processes which underpin positive, negative and ambivalent dispositions towards *Europe*, and, second, to consider the relationships between such attitudes, if there are any. To begin, the role of the *Super Club Network*, which was introduced in Chapter Three, is discussed, before moving beyond this to question whether the identifications it produces can have a social use, such as providing legitimacy for the EU or reducing intra-European xenophobia.

THE SUPER CLUB NETWORK

Chapter Three outlined that at least where the consumption of football is concerned; Liverpool supporters have simultaneously broken some identification with England and entwined strong local and weaker transnational European identifications. Although European interests are locally situated, the chapter ended with the conjecture that many of these processes could be felt by fans of other large football clubs, who could form part of a *Super Club Network*. In this research, Liverpool joins Manchester United in King's research (2000; 2003) as part of this network. Although a major reason why Liverpool supporters are rejecting Englishness is because of the socio-economic hardship the city suffered in comparison to England's south-east heartland (particularly in the 1980s

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Thatcher years) and the associated English stereotypes of 'scousers', the role of sport is significant because it provides a way of imagining Liverpool as superior to the rest of the nation (especially 'the south'). Therefore, by forming part of this network, Liverpool supporters' identifications are geared towards a football defined *perception* of 'Europe'.

To understand the *Super Club Network*, it is necessary to recognise the significance of networks within the broader contemporary society. In contemporary sociology, the network has become tied to the theory found in Manuel Castells' *Information Age* trilogy (Castells 2000 [1996]; 2004 [1997]; 1998). Networks are generally defined as a geographical space made up of discrete points which are bound together by links, people, capital and ideas which flow between nodes (Jónsson et al 2000: 23). According to Castells, networks are becoming the primary form of social organisation throughout the world and this is making established national boundaries increasingly porous (Castells 2000 [1996]). The defining feature of Castells' theory is that network power cannot be centralised, but instead resides 'somewhere' between nodal points, although exactly where is unknown because power is in flux and entirely dependant upon situational context. This gives each node a point in time where it is most powerful. Melucci (1996: 207-221) concurs with this view by arguing that contemporary societies are increasingly controlled by a myriad of networks. For instance, he argues that a range of networked new social movements challenge (and shape) the central, bureaucratic decision-making hierarchies in both national, but more often transnational, settings. Castells (2000a: 14) argues that in most cases networks are threatening the central, hierarchical, power structure of 'the state' because mega-cities are classically the nodes of the global network society. The UN defines mega cities as 'very large agglomerations of human beings ... with over 10 million people in 1992 ... and four of them projected to be well over 20 million in 2010' (Castells

2000: 434). However, for Castells (2000; 2000a), the defining nodal qualities of mega cities are that they are crucially important to the global economy in that they connect huge segments of the human population to the global system. Also, the national media are located in mega-cities, which gives such cities a distinct advantage in the quest for the politics of power and the symbolic capacity to create and diffuse messages. Above all else, Castells views mega cities as functioning as magnets for the whole country or regional area in which they are geographically located. For instance, Hong Kong and Guangzhou constitute a sole mega city of 40-50 million people connecting Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Zhuhai, Macau, and other smaller towns. This demonstrates two inter-related and key factors. First, that in the network society, the global forces of capitalism are fully realised with anything of little or no value subsumed by other firms, territories, resources or cities (Castells 2000a: 15), and second, that mega cities are simultaneously allied to both the global network and to local segments of their own country (Castells 2000: 436). Castells argues that in the information age, a mega city becomes economically more viable than the nation to which it belongs because it connects to other mega cities in the global arena. The role of *capital* is all defining in the network, so while the nation-state is sustained, it becomes a tertiary consideration, falling behind the lure of local, and city based interests and the wider, more lucrative international space. Therefore the role of the nation states and the network society become counter-posed, because networks have 'no centre' and their flexibilities see them supersede nation states as the primary focus of loyalty (see also Jónsson *et al.* 2000; McNeil 2004).

Further, as the increase of nodal dominance is in direct opposition to the state, it creates a possible crisis for national sovereignty as global flows of wealth, communication and information lead citizens and institutions to question the legitimacy of national authority.

However, Castells (2000) argues that neither the nation nor state disappears, but are diminished by the elusive power structure of networks and have to adapt to retain any status. There are two ways in which this can be carried out. First, nation-states can devolve and decentralise power to regions and local governments and second, national governments can form partnerships with other nation-states in order to share mutual influence (Castells 2000). Indeed, both Castells (1998) and Rumford (2000) have argued that the continued development of the EU can partly be seen as a way that European nation-states attempt to retain power in the era of transnationalism. Therefore, although the network society is not deliberately opposed to nation-states, its key agents are ultimately in search of greater wealth and this is achieved by operating in larger markets than those merely in the national 'space'. This prompts the move toward the international arena of the network society.

In the example of football, G14 constitute many of the nodes of the *Super Club Network*. In much the same way that Castells' classic nodes of the network society are defined as the 13-UN defined mega-cities, plus a select number of non-UN defined mega-cities, G14 plus a small number of other mega football clubs make up the *Super Club Network*. On this basis, it is worthwhile to give an extended consideration of what G14 represent and how their future may be shaped in the future.

G14 are a lobby group of European superclubs that have clustered together in order to challenge the centralised power authorities of national FAs and the international football bodies of FIFA and UEFA. Although G14 were formed in 1998, the group was only

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legally constituted in 2000 (Banks 2002: 129-30) and given the status of an EEIG.⁷⁹

Currently, there are eighteen members of the group. These are composed of fourteen original members, who are: Real Madrid, AC Milan, Bayern Munich, Liverpool, Ajax, Juventus, Inter Milan, Barcelona, Borussia Dortmund, Marseilles, PSV Eindhoven, Paris St. Germain, Porto and Manchester United, and four invited members: Arsenal, Bayer Leverkusen, Valencia and Lyon.

The original fourteen members were born from the structural changes to UEFA club competitions in the 1990s. At the centre of this transition, the Champions League replaced the European Cup as Europe's premier club competition in 1992/3 season. Therefore the rebranding facilitated the later change from a 'knock out' cup format to a series of mini leagues (in 1993/4) which was developed after pressure was placed on UEFA by an alliance of Glasgow Rangers, through their chairman, David Murray and Real Madrid, though major shareholder Ramon Mendoza. These two figures joined AC Milan owner (and future prime minister of Italy) Silvio Berlusconi to create the temporary 'Media Partners' grouping.⁸⁰ This move mirrored the earlier power struggle between English clubs and the English football league, which culminated in the creation of the FA Premier League in the 1992/3 season (see King 2002 [1998]). The impact of this pressure undoubtedly influenced the outcome of UEFA's decision, the Media Partner's were seeking assured entry to the European Cup and a greater share of the overall prize money. This

⁷⁹ An EEIG is an association linking organisations from different countries within the European Union that need to work together, enabling them to do business across boundaries. EEIGs work within a neutral framework that is independent of individual national legal systems, meaning that G14 are on an equal footing in terms of familiarity with the law. It is noted that an EEIG should not make a profit for itself, but should be apportioned between members and taxed accordingly.

⁸⁰ Again, in 1994/5 the Media Partners placed pressure upon UEFA to dramatically change the Champions League fixture structure. Under this new system, there were four qualifying leagues, from which the top two teams qualified, leading into a two-legged quarterfinal. This appealed members of the clambering superclubs, by decreasing the chances of critical early round 'giant killing' results and meant that the chances of smaller teams progressing to the later rounds, at the expense of 'superclubs' became smaller; this appealed to UEFA as it increased the market value of television rights.

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clearly contradicted UEFA's pledge to provide equal opportunity to clubs from all member associations, but the Media Partners threatened to set up their own European superleague if their requests were not met. Ultimately, UEFA compromised its position by offering large clubs an improved chance of Champions League qualification (particularly from the 1997/8 season) and a greater share of television monies, by allowing leagues which had large national television markets an increased number of Champions League qualifying places.

As a result of the success of club pressure, G14 was created. As an EEIG, G14 take the view that their collective influence will place them in a position of ultimate authority in European and global football (Boyle and Haynes 2004). Therefore the basis of the *Super Club Network*, as G14, was created with the intention of further challenging the way UEFA ran the Champions League. The pressure group had manipulated its opening structural changes to the Champions League when for the first time, the team finishing in second place in the leading national leagues across Europe was granted access to the Champions League competition. Second, the group were not entirely happy with the way TEAM (UEFA's marketing partners) were attempting to maximise income from the Champions League and suggested restructuring its selling policies from individual games to complete packages. Therefore, the opportunity was also taken to charge companies from the largest national television markets – England, Italy, Germany, Spain and France – significantly larger fees for exclusive rights. Ultimately, this meant that clubs from these countries were awarded a greater share of television incomes (King 2003; Martin 2005). Banks (2002: 128) points out that in the 1997/8 season the Champions League generated £185m, with £100m awarded to participating clubs. The remainder was split between UEFA's then-51 member football associations (£55m) - to aid smaller professional clubs and promote youth development - and TEAM (£35m). The pressure group believed that the rewards should be more heavily weighted to the leading clubs, and argued that the total figure generated could

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be substantially higher if the tournament increased the number of clubs emitted from the strongest football nations. As a result, the number of clubs from England, Italy, Germany, Spain and France – the countries which also had the largest national television markets - continued to expand to reach a maximum of four teams in the following years, as the number of participating clubs grew from 24 to 32 teams. Due to these changes, key boardroom members of clubs from these nations began to have ‘informal meetings – without minutes or agendas – just sitting together sharing dinner and having fun’ (Anonymous G14 executive, personal interview, 29th September 2005). From these meetings, G14 was established.

In much the same way that the nodes of the wider network society question the legitimacy of hierarchies, G14 have caused problems for national associations. At the core of this is the challenge to the authority of such organisations. A theme in this book has been the impact of perceived *threat* upon identifications, in the *Super Club Network* elite football provides profitable commercial opportunities which national football teams are alleged to be threatening. On this basis, club-country disputes break out. These typically come in at least three guises. The first two of these relate to player availability. As seen through the eyes of supporters in Chapter Three, it is difficult for those with solely club based loyalties to understand why national teams should be able to take their star player and potentially injure him in the process. The problem is not as acute in major tournaments such as the World Cup finals – in which the rewards of victory are clearly prestigious and tangible – or local major tournament qualifying games. However, G14 take umbrage to international ‘call ups’ for their players in either ‘friendly’ international games or mid-season tournament qualifying matches of non-European players. National teams are allowed to do this because FIFA Articles 36 to 40 stipulates that clubs must allow international players to

appear in international matches (*Soccer Investor* 2005). Yet, during the data collection period, England manager Sven Goran Eriksson was consistently sympathetic to super club distress by refusing to play star players from G14 clubs he could have chosen from, namely, Manchester United, Arsenal, Liverpool, Real Madrid and Bayern Munich for the full 90 minutes in non-competitive games. At the same time, Eriksson was less sympathetic to the concerns of non-G14 clubs – aside from Chelsea - who have not lobbied the FAs. Therefore, their players often take part in the full duration of ‘friendly’ internationals. Attached to this issue is the problem G14 have with star employees playing in a fixture in another continent midweek when he has club duties to perform the following weekend. Quite clearly, the travelling involved means that players are often tired or fatigued by ‘jet lag’. Inevitably, this affects club performance. The anonymous G14 executive recognised these tensions when he argued:

There has been very little problem about the availability of English players. It would all be sorted out because the English clubs are proud of the English national team, and the English national team is proud of the English teams and the players. It would all be sorted out because they support each other. They belong to the same culture and address the same culture and group and supporters, because the Manchester United supporters are England supporters, the Aston Villa supporters are England supporters. You cannot nurture a conflict inside this, because they want to support both their club and national team... But after the Bosman ruling things have changed with the abolition of the European ‘foreigners’ rule... This means that nowadays the English clubs have some English players but also some Nigerian, French, Italian, Swiss, Brazilian, Colombian, whatever. Now you have the problem because the interests of the association are not the interests of the club... [For instance] the French FA don’t have to respect the interests of the English club.

Anonymous G14 executive (personal interview, 29th September 2005)

Although the G14 executives’ interpretation of supporter values is not consistent with either those found within the Liverpool supporter group (see Chapter Three) or Manchester United fans (see King 2000; 2003), his general argument is that home FAs have learned to

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co-operate with the demands of their G14 clubs but the presence of *foreign* players has created new dilemmas as similar transnational understandings have yet to be developed. This creates clear institutional tensions between club and national football teams.

The second, related, issue that causes unease from G14 towards national associations is the issue of player wages. Currently, even if a player is on international duty, the club who employs him continues to pay his wages. This issue becomes particularly pressing if a player is injured while on international *duty*, as FIFA Article 37 stipulates that a club has no right to any financial indemnity and is solely responsible for insurance costs. Indeed, whilst Charleroi player, Abdelmajid Oulmers was playing for Morocco in a friendly match against Burkina-Faso in November 2004, he suffered a rupture in his left ankle ligament which caused him to miss a large number of club matches through injury. Although Charleroi is not a G14 member, the group have long shared this particular grievance and sponsored the case, which is now due to be considered in the European Courts. If G14 and Charleroi win the case, FIFA's policy on player release will have to change. This will inevitably favour the position of large clubs. On face value, the demands of G14 are unproblematic, yet, in the age of transnational football labour markets, often highly paid players hail from countries whose national associations are not well endowed. It would be problematic, if, in the future, players international 'call-ups' were decided by whether the national team could afford to reimburse his club for his wages. The third point of contestation concerns the lack of return clubs receive from major international tournaments. The issue that G14 raise is that World Cups and other football mega-events are highly lucrative – the 2006 World Cup was predicted to generate more than £1.5billion in direct revenue (*Soccer Investor* 2006) - but, the clubs, who employ the players do not receive any direct remuneration. This point is made by the G14 executive:

Financial compensation should be given to the clubs – not every time when a player goes to an international game – but when significant revenue is generated, a share of the revenue should go to the clubs who make the players available... That cost is not just simply salary cost, we calculated, roughly speaking, that the cost of each player is €5,000 per game. Chelsea is not in it – there are big clubs in there, but not Chelsea. But there are also small clubs in there, such as Ajax Amsterdam, PSV, Porto. They have turnovers which are far beneath certain English clubs' turnovers. I think that could be the target, if we take €5000 and say, okay, 'how many player days does the Euro Championship require?' You come to a figure which is a bit below 10,000 player days – if you include the 14 days preparation and then you have so many days for group matches and then so many days for each of the knockout stages and you come up for a figure which is about 10,000. Which means that you have 10,000 days at the cost of €5,000 you come up with a figure of €50m. For a World Cup the pattern is larger as you have more than 22,000 days, because there are 32 as opposed to 16 teams, making €110m. You can say let's remove 10 per cent of the overall revenue and give 7 per cent to those clubs who have made players available and 3 per cent to all those others who have given players during the qualifying round. First we need to agree on the principle and then we will find a solution. So the FAs could distribute the money.

Anonymous G14 executive (personal interview, 29th September 2005)

Therefore, on three levels, G14 battle institutionally against the precedence of national teams. This is in common with Castells' model in which nodes of the global network society challenge the authority of nation-states. The role of *capital* in this configuration of football power can also be considered to be an accurate application of Castells' theory. Castells (2000) sees capital as the all defining mechanism of power. Therefore, in the age of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) it is the neo-liberal flexibility of industry in mega-cities which make them more appealing than rigid nation-state power. In the *Super Club Network*, the same principle applies with clubs gaining power over national associations because the disparities of wealth are becoming smaller, and some clubs are now wealthier than national associations. Underlining this point, Giulianotti (2004) pointed out that in 2004, the Euro Championship winners Greece gained £13m prize money. This unfavourably compared to the £70m that Porto received for winning the Champions League just two months earlier. Indeed, an additional reference to the claim

that capital is all pervasive in the elite configuration is given by Parkes (2005: 22)⁸¹ who stated that 'many clubs now view Champions League qualification as ... the cake itself rather than the icing upon it'. This highlights the economic dimension of European club football, as Castells (1998: 248) also argued that, for these reasons, the leading European football clubs now pay maximum attention to Europe's elite competition, prompted by revenue driven concerns, and give off the 'we *belong* in Europe' message.

As considered in Chapter Three, this message is mainly interpreted by supporters as referring to the experiences which are gathered through fan travel during European 'away' games, although there is also a sharp awareness that revenue generated through Champions League participation benefits the club. From this perspective, Liverpool supporters appear to take the view that what is 'good for the club, is good for them'. It is interesting to consider what impact this is having upon supporter identifications. In Chapter Three, it was noted that Liverpool fans told pro-European narratives (fan travel, revenue, prestige etc.) which did not significantly *other* European rivals, although the discursive self-definition of identification (known as *autotypification*) – which was present in King's research into Manchester United fans ('a Europhile' etc. see King 2000: 426) – was absent or actively rejected because it was seen as analogous to Euro-nationalism (see the Ryder Cup discourse in Chapter Three). Yet, from Chapter Three, it seemed as if some identification with a notion of Europe (in so far as transnational club competition) is developing along the lines of the *Super Club Network*. This may be explained by Castells' (2004) notion of the *legitimising identity*. Castells (2004: 8) argues that 'a legitimising identity generates a civil society; that is, a set of organizations and institutions, as well as a series of structured and organised actors, which reproduce ... the identity that rationalises

⁸¹ Rich Parkes is employed by accountancy firm Deloitte and Touche.

the sources of structural domination'. In other words, Castells argues that a legitimising identity is the favourable cultural reaction that a group may produce in response to external (structural) conditions. This process of identification formation may explain how the Liverpool supporters might develop positive opinions about Europe which are formed on the premise of agreeable perceptions/experiences and slowly give rise to weak European identifications. Future manifestations of European identifications may be further explained using Bourdieu's (2000 [1984]) notion of the *habitus*. Once again, the role of capital is vital to understand the habitus. Bourdieu (1986) argues that capital comes in three interconnected forms: economic, social and cultural. Economic capital is that which is readily convertible into money, but also recognised in property rights, motor vehicles and other material entities. Social capital is the benefit inherent in social relationships and explains the levels of trust and compatibility. Unlike economic capital, social capital is not always tangible and may be symbolic. The same is true of cultural capital. This form of capital is evident in any area of social life in which individuals react to institutions. Typically, Bourdieu (1986: 242) describes cultural capital as manifest in the field of education, and explains how some students seem to implicitly *understand the rules of the game*. Bourdieu (2000 [1984]) describes the habitus as precisely the interplay between external (structural) factors, such those institutions which create and bestow capital, and individuals who react to these conditions by refining tastes. In this research, UEFA awards both material (cash rewards) and symbolic (prestige, the opportunity to travel across Europe) capital upon football clubs and supporters. This ingrains in identifications. Therefore, if Bourdieu's theory can be applied to fans of *Super Club Network* representative teams, it is reasonable to expect that supporter tastes, which are reported back on e-zine messageboards as fan narratives, are *Europeanising* with every experience of European football. In this way, it is probably assumed that the Europeanisation of fan

identifications is incremental. However, Roche (2000) offers an interesting idea that such identifications are not evolutionary. Instead he argues that occasionally occurring 'mega events' rapidly change the way citizens think about either themselves or a socio-cultural situation. This may have happened immediately after Liverpool's 2004/5 Champions League victory, given the mass of European capital placed upon the club. Of course, given that this research takes just fourteen months worth of analysis, it is impossible to gauge whether changes are incremental or sudden, yet just five months after his club's Champions League final victory, Liverpool fan (36) gave a clear indication that he had legitimised/internalised the capital of the European experience by arguing:

These days we seem more interested in Europe than the Premiership. The team has been consistently ranked amongst the best in Europe even when we haven't been in the top 3 teams in England. Look at us last year, fifth in England, but the best in Europe. I know which one I'd choose. As supporters we have rejected anything English and revelled in our European outlook and style and exotic destinations. It's easy isn't it? Premiership away? A long day out that costs a fortune to visit another depressing part of the UK and then do it all again in two weeks.

Europe's our new bread and butter, even though we'd all grab at the Premiership, if it was on offer.

Liverpool fan (36) (9th November, 2005)

This comment highlights the progression of the movement of the Europeanisation of Liverpool supporter identifications a short while after the data collection period of the research had ended. Although Liverpool fan (36) still does not declare himself as 'European', he clearly acknowledges that a Europe defined by trans-continental football tournaments has played a strong role upon the constitution of his supporter identification. Interpreted through Bourdieu's (2000 [1984]) habitus framework, it appears that Liverpool fan (36) has internalised the capital which was awarded from his team's Champions League success earlier that year. This has impacted upon his tastes, so far as he uses the analogy that 'Europe's our new bread and butter'. This attitude appears to be an accentuated

version of the typical supporter culture which was researched during the fourteen month data collection period. However, it seems that the process has been exaggerated by the 'mega-event' (c.f. Roche 2000) of winning the European Champions League in May. It is also interesting to note that Liverpool fan (36) perceives a trade off between European and national identifications in that he argues that he and his fellow Liverpool have 'rejected anything English and revelled in our European outlook and style'. This clearly relates to debates which emerged in Chapter One, and were hinted at in Chapter Three, in that the type of European identification which may be formed through football supporter activities is probably not one which is built from strong national identities/identifications. Indeed, it seems as if Castells' model of the network resonates with supporters' values in so far as Liverpool fan (36) clearly principally identifies with Liverpool whilst legitimating the transnational (European) space but, on the other hand, sees no place for national identification in this cultural constellation. It is also noteworthy that in this comment, 'Europe' once again appears to be defined as football competition rather than any of the multiple other meanings associated to it.

On the evidence of this and Chapter Three, the experience gathered from regular trans-European football and the position of the *Super Club Network*, by guiding access and regulating the conditions, is having an impact upon fan identifications. It is impossible to accurately predict how the future of G14 might develop in the future, but it is extremely likely that the group will continue to further expand. This view was validated by the G14 executive, who stated:

In the future, we will expand further: Turkey, Scotland, Brazil, Argentina to clubs with international reputations...

Anonymous G14 executive (personal interview, 29th September 2005)

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From a critical sociological perspective, it is interesting to question the institutional quality which grants membership to this elite network. Initially, network association was based upon the criteria that each club had previously won the Champions League, or its forerunner, the European Cup. However, since the accession of the four invited members in 2003, Millward (2006) and Sugden (2002) have both pointed out that it is uncertain exactly what attains membership. Yet, amidst this confusion, it is certain that national television markets play an active role in determining it. To open this debate, arguably the most significant *Super Club Network* output came under auspice of the Media Partners when, as earlier mentioned, they encouraged UEFA to rename the European Cup as the Champions League. According to both King (2003: 142) and Martin (2005), this change was significant because it allowed UEFA to maximise profits by changing their television sales policy from selling the rights to individual European games, or rounds, to complete and exclusive packages. Banks (2002: 129) argues that such changes took the 'financial relevance of the Champions League to a whole new level' and – in the era of G14 - with the award of a further eight extra Champions League places divided between clubs in the five major television markets in the 1998/9 season, UEFA's television income rose to a new high of £670m. Of this, £490m was distributed to participating clubs, with the largest shares awarded to clubs from the 'big five' national television markets. This means that for super clubs who hail from such nations, a place in the Europe's premier competition is worth an estimated £10m upon qualification; winning the tournament is conservatively worth £70m (Giulianotti 2004), although according to some sources, this figure is more like £100m (Andrews 2002). Therefore, it would be foolish to argue that the role of the nation is being rendered insignificant in the *Super Club Network*. So, whilst the national space has become secondary to local club interests in the transnational space – a view that resonates in fans' opinions – the nation continues to have the role of revenue facilitator for

super clubs. Once again, this is similar to Castells' vision of the network society, which as earlier considered, shows that an adapted nation-state, which seeks to serve the crucial nodes which are located within it, clearly survives in the international capitalistic space. Yet, this consideration prompts critical questioning into the G14 executive's claims. Specifically, he refers to clubs from Turkey, Scotland, Brazil and Argentina joining the elite group of clubs. This is particularly interesting, given that fifteen out of the eighteen current members are located in the five largest (exclusively European) national television markets. Given that each of these nations offer clubs with 'international reputations', if the proposed future expansion was legitimate, it would mirror a more inclusive G14 institutional structure. However it is more likely that other large clubs from lucrative national television markets, such AS Roma of Italy, or most likely, Chelsea from England, would be granted entry. Indeed, when asked about the likelihood of Chelsea joining G14, he replied:

Well, perhaps. Chelsea are now of that standard. I mean, Peter Kenyon was at Manchester United for many years and attended the G14 meetings. Just because he has changed clubs does not mean that he is not the same man. He still understands the same things... I mean, they have a very good team and you have to give them time. They will do well and, of course, have Roman Abramovich.

Anonymous G14 executive (personal interview, 29th September 2005)

The vague nature of the executive's comment is interesting. For instance, he does not define what 'that standard' refers to: standard in football terms often refers to playing quality – which since the Arsenal's accession in 2002, Chelsea have greatly improved, especially given the investment of Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich in the team's playing staff.⁸² However, because he partially qualified his statement by referring to the

⁸² This also makes Chelsea an extremely interesting case study for future research in so far as it would be interesting to consider if its fans were identifying with any definition of Russia. Indeed if, as

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role of Chelsea Chief Executive, Peter Kenyon, who was hired in 2003 after resigning from his similar post at Manchester United, it seems likely that 'the standard' probably meant commercial awareness. If this was the case, it would reaffirm G14's position as a business-led enterprise. This would almost certainly mean that members would continue to hail from the most lucrative national television markets, and operate in the European playing space (i.e. the Champions League) which remains football's 'core economy' (Gardiner and Welch 2000: 107). Nevertheless, despite Chelsea and AS Roma's non-G14 membership, they, along with similar wealthy and successful clubs would still form nodal points in the *Super Club Network*.

Alternatively, even in large national television markets, most clubs are not part of the elite transnational network. Whilst television revenue from the English Premiership has meant that the clubs that are established members gather significant television revenues (even without Champions League qualification) which is sufficient for most of its entrants, the reality is often different further down the professional football leagues. This was the case for Oldham Athletic during the data collection period. At the core of their financial perils was the fall of *ITV Digital*, in 2002. In June 2000, after months of negotiation – outbidding *BSkyB*, *NTL*, *Telewest* and *Channel 5* in the process - *ONDigital* (later renamed *ITV Digital*) bought exclusive television rights to the 'Nationwide' Football League. The contract covered three years sole access and was brokered at £315m. This was to be split between 72 league clubs, and was a 400 per cent hike from the previous contract, which was worth around £25m per year.⁸³ At the start of the contract (August 2001), clubs such as Oldham Athletic, benefited from a share of an initial payment of 136.5m, with two

Jenkins (1996) argues, identities have an external value, it is interesting to note that many fans of Chelsea's rivals play on this potential link by referring to them as 'Chelski'.

⁸³ Banks (2002: 114) argues that whilst this was a giant leap in revenue for Football League clubs, the actual size is contextualised by the fact that 20 Premiership clubs shared £220m a year on their deal with *BSkyB*.

further instalments of £89.25m due in August 2002 and August 2003 (Boyle and Haynes 2004: 31-4).

Yet, whilst the first two instalments were received, the final payment was not. From its launch, *ITV Digital* commanded consistently poor viewer ratings and the company were not prepared to cover any stabilising period, so, whilst *ITV* made a concession to cover the second instalment of £89m, it was clear that the contract was in danger.⁸⁴ These fears were realised on 27th March 2002 when the company went into administration, with a payment deficit of £89m. Boyle and Haynes (2004: 99) and Banks (2002) have independently noted that the collapse of *ITV Digital* ultimately hurt football more than the media corporation, as clubs such as Oldham Athletic were left with a sizable income shortfall. According to Banks (2002: 122) the impact of *ITV Digital's* collapse was felt heaviest by 'First Division' clubs as the deal was worth £3m per year to each member from this category. 'Second Division' clubs –including Oldham Athletic – each lost £600,000 per year and 'Third Division' clubs did not receive £400,000. There is logic to Banks' argument - First Division clubs also tended to have higher wage bills – but on the other hand, clubs from all divisions budgeted for these payments, and therefore the damage was felt at all three levels. The Labour Government refused to cover any losses by arguing that clubs were 'responsible for their own finances and had brought the problem on themselves' (Boyle and Haynes 2004: 43). Therefore, the missing payment meant many clubs were threatened with bankruptcy. Oldham Athletic provided one such example; with debts of £2.9m (and losing £50,000 per week) it was placed into administration on 19th August 2003.

⁸⁴ According to Boyle and Haynes (2004: 36), the channel attracted only 200,000 subscribers by the start of the 2001/2 season and drew as few as 1,000 viewers for some matches.

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With many football clubs ailing – Banks (2002: 9) reported that up to 30 out of 72 League clubs were faced with the threat of extinction - the Government eventually did move to quell this threat to professional football by increasing funding to ‘Supporters Direct’. While this body did not actually cover any debts, it was staffed by a small number of advisors who worked with ‘Supporters Trusts’ (branches of supporters who had bought seats on the board of their club). The message outlined by the Government was that it could not directly donate cash to football clubs, but that they should have to turn to their communities to find additional sources of income. With no sign of external investment, Oldham Athletic appointed supporters trust leader Barry Owen to the board. Owen was not a benefactor in that he did not have a massive personal fortune to ‘invest’ in the club, but he did possess both expertise at running businesses and a life long interest in Oldham Athletic. Since his appointment, he has prided himself in ‘good, transparent management’ (messageboard comment, 30th July 2005) which effectively meant that he tried not to hide any club-related financial issues from fans. It is relevant to point out that although *JKL* is not owned/run by Owen (who therefore holds no inherent authority) he uses the messageboard facility to communicate with fans.⁸⁵ Given these communications, the Oldham Athletic sample fans are acutely aware of the club’s financial position, and how close it was extinction.

Under Castells’ (2004) model of identity formation, the legitimising identity is pitted against *resistance* and *project* identities. According to Castells (2004: 9) the resistance identity is born from a culture in which collective defiance is developed against the external conditions. Defiance, in this form, is expressed through discursive practices rather than physical actions and helps to encourage a group opposition. The project identity moves

⁸⁵ This ought not to be so surprising, given that Michie (2003) points out that many Supporter Trusts began from the fanzine movement

beyond merely discursive challenges in that it is developed when social groups oppose perceived oppression to the extent that they begin to build their alternative situations, either through social protest or the creation of a new social situation which is removed from the point of confrontation. Despite the wide inequalities that are produced in the age of advanced football capitalism and the role G14 and other super clubs have played in creating this, *Europe* - recognised through Champions League football - is not outwardly rejected through either resistance or project identities. Rather, the impact that Europe has upon Oldham Athletic fans in the club context – as opposed to the national team – is minimal. Therefore, it is not true that Oldham Athletic supporters are repeating narratives which relate to how the European experience has not been beneficial to them (i.e. actively resenting revenues generated by the Champions League and the missed supporter experiences attached to European travel) but it is actually the case that this does not play a prominent role in their fan activities. Thus, European identifications do not form, but are also not outwardly rejected. Rather, it is more sensible to follow Bourdieu's model (2000 [1984]) and consider that Oldham Athletic fans have only been surrounded by national material and symbolic capital, which has shaped their tastes (*habitus*) as English or British, rather than European. Therefore, Oldham Athletic supporters are likely to position themselves as *England fans*. When they do this, they are likely to perceive other international teams as the out-group which they juxtapose themselves against. Some international teams, who have shared history with *the English*, are more outwardly rejected than those who have, historically, not been connected. Given the geographical proximity of countries like France, cultural processes of *otherness* are revealed by venerating national identities. When this occurs, pervasive national identities overpower almost non-existent (but not rejected) European identifications. However, the same events are not important to Liverpool fans, who, as considered in Chapter Three, do not see themselves as *English*, and

do not support the English national team to the same levels (if at all). What is more, given the shared memories of the Heysel tragedy, Liverpool fans do not *other* non-British European teams; in the way they do either national rivals or the English football team. Thus, on this evidence, nationhood prohibits the development of football-based European identifications, but is not felt by super club supporters such as Liverpool or Manchester United (see King 2000; 2003). Hence the habitus and legitimising identities assist the development of European football-based identifications for supporters of clubs who are included within the *Super Club Network* but the way different sources of capital are bestowed upon non-super club teams does not assist such fans in developing a sense of identification with a definition of Europe.

THE SUPER CLUB NETWORK GENERATED EUROPEAN IDENTIFICATION

It is necessary to consider the significance of the type of European identification which is produced by the interpretation of the actions of super clubs. In *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration*, Shore (2000) argues that whilst the European institutions may have cultivated the competencies to develop European cultural policy in 1992, which augmented the Adonnino report of 1985, a socially useful European identification is not automatically produced. Therefore, while he argues that some European citizens may positively identify with the EU flag and anthem, this does not significantly affect their values and make them feel European in a way that penetrates below the level of an identification with an arrangement of musical notes, or a piece of colour-coded cloth which blows in the wind. In sum, symbolic identification does not necessarily create institutional legitimacy, which he envisaged as the aim of a European identity. While it is probably also necessary to see at least the growth of cosmopolitan

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values and the reduction in intra-European xenophobia as socially useful articulations of European identifications, his argument may be largely valid, although he does not empirically test his claims. Therefore, it is sensible to ask whether the allegations Shore (2000) makes about the cultural policy-led European identification can also be applied to the *Super Club Network*-generated European identification.

Certainly the results in Chapters Four and Five would suggest that the football-based European identification carried only marginal value in the wider society. As earlier noted, Chapter Four looked at attitudes toward football players from various territories (local, non-local British, non-British European and non-European) and found that, during times of poor team performance, British players were consistently preferred to (European or non-European) *foreigners*. However, it could be argued that the nature of xenophobic exclusion was different between the two sets of fans.

As previously considered, in the *Super Club Network*, supporters of large clubs gain *freedom* (defined by trans-European fan travel and increased revenue and prestige for the club they support) from the nation-state from which they hail. This provides immense excitement for fans. Bauman (2001) argues that each individual has psychological needs required to prevent him/her from feeling 'claustrophobic'. Such freedom is associated to channels of European experience because, for Bauman (1998: 121) '[f]reedom has come to mean above all freedom of choice, and choice has acquired, conspicuously, a spatial dimension.' Therefore the opening up of a *Europe* which is defined by football fan experience creates new allusions to freedom for supporters. Hence, whilst it was previously discussed that Liverpool and possibly other *Super Club Network* fans have

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formed weak European identifications through cultural values, in which external forces of capital create controlled reactions (c.f. Bourdieu 2000 [1984]; Castells 2004 [1997]), there is a double edged process of identification formation as the European experience also suffices individual psychological needs. Thus, applying Bauman's theory of liquid modernity (1998; 2000; 2001; 2004; 2005) weak-European identifications are formed by appealing to fans' psychological 'wants'. Yet, this type of European identification can never be complete in that it is only appealing because it sets elite club fans free from the humdrum, national football fan experiences. Thus, if a European identification strengthened to become the 'norm' (in much the same way as national identities/identifications currently are for many) it is likely that super club supporters would shift their focus of emancipation beyond Europe to other territories. Thus, if a *strong* European identification was to develop, it is likely that *Europe* would begin to be perceived as the psychological shackle in a field of global freedoms. In the context of football, this may happen if a European super league was set up which replaced both the Champions League and, most significantly, national league participation. Of course, this is somewhat speculative especially given that the European identifications developed through the *Super Club Network* have not reached this level, but if Bauman's theory (1998; 2000; 2004) is valid, a coherent European identification could not be developed.

However, alongside freedom, Bauman (2004: 29) has argued that social actors also have a psychological 'desire for *security*' (my emphasis). This provides a 'catch 22' situation in the development of European identifications through football and helps to elaborate the tensions between the results found in Chapters Three and Four. To explain, whilst individuals seek freedom from their established territorial cultures, such as the nation-state, he/she is also prone to need a sense of security. Bauman describes this need as part of the same process of freedom, in that they are 'two

equally precious and coveted values' (Bauman 2001: 4). In the early, or traditional, modern age, identity was defined by the way that the rigid, national-specific institutions defined culture and provided national securities (Bauman 2000). Thus, nationality provided a form of security. The results in Chapters Three and Four provide sufficient evidence to suggest that the Liverpool fans' imagined identification is most clearly located at the level of the city/region, rather than nation-state.

However, the transnational freedoms offered by the *Super Club Network* in Chapter Three also constitute threats when the issue of xenophobia is considered (Chapter Four), in that all non-British players (and to an extent, everybody who is not Liverpool born/former youth team player) are perceived as 'others'. Therefore, as super clubs are more likely to participate in the transnational transfer market than smaller clubs, the freedoms that were so appealing in Chapter Three lose some of their charm in Chapter Four.⁸⁶ Such prejudices are expressed through a wide range of frames, such as 'illegitimate competitors' (the claim that other players provide illegitimate competition to 'our' players, as they potentially take up places in club first teams, therefore prohibiting their full development). Bauman substantiates this claim by arguing:

When *security* is missing, free agents are stripped of the confidence without which freedom can hardly be exercised... When, on the other hand, it is *freedom* that is missing, security feels like slavery or prison... Any increase in freedom may be read as a decrease of security, and vice versa (*italics original emphasis*).

Bauman (2005: 36)

Following Bauman's claim that freedom and security are two necessary polar opposites which are needed to generate a 'satisfied' European identity, a football based

⁸⁶ This claim is evidenced by the fact that during the fourteen month sample period, Liverpool employed 19 non-British European and four non-European players, whilst Oldham Athletic hired just one non-British European and three non-European players.

transnational identification can only exist in a fractured and exclusionary state. A super club fan must realise that his/her culture is not entirely the same as those in the liquid space, although this way of living may hold a certain appeal due to its unobtainable exotic nature. Once supporters imagine their community to fully extend to Europe, the desire for freedom beyond such borders would emerge. This means that the European identification which materialises amongst Liverpool supporters in Chapter Three does not help to extinguish intra-European xenophobia, even within the cultural context of football.

The type of xenophobic comments that Oldham Athletic fans express are qualitatively different to Liverpool supporters. Rather, their xenophobic comments are not prompted by a delicate balance of freedom and security – having not participated in trans-European football competition they are not aware of transnational freedom – but are based upon their national identifications. They have learned that in order to venerate a love of their nation, it is helpful to denigrate non-national *others*. Once again, the work of Bauman is useful to understand this process. Bauman (2001; 2003) argues that nation building has two faces: the nationalist and liberal. He argues that the ‘nationalist face was gloomy, cheerless and severe – on occasion cruel, seldom benign’ as it sought to eradicate differences in whatever way it could (Bauman 2001: 91). In short, according to Bauman, if nationalism, which gave rise to xenophobia, could culturally exclude on the basis of ignorance toward others, a greater love of nationhood would be developed. Bauman (2001) maintains that the ‘liberal face’ was different, by suggesting that ‘[i]t was friendly and benevolent; it smiled most of the time, and the smile it wore was inviting... [and] the enemies of tolerance were no longer tolerated, the pure essence, common to all humans, would emerge from the dungeons of parochialism and tradition’ (ibid: 92). This tension

highlights some of the contradictions in studying collective identities/identifications. In Chapter Three, it was considered that the minority of Oldham Athletic fans' comments that rejected English nationalism did so because they saw national identifications as being exclusionary. Effectively, these fans were rejecting the 'nationalist face' of national identification. However, the majority of Oldham Athletic supporters showed support for *Englishness*. Some of these did so by utilising the nationalist model, whereas others showed the liberal face. Thus, the period under which xenophobic attitudes rose to the fore was during Euro2004, when support was gathered for the English national team. This predominantly took the form of the illegitimate ethno-difference frame – the claim that 'others' have inherently different temperaments to 'us' – in which Oldham Athletic fans spoke as English citizens against *foreign* Europeans. However, the importance of 'others' being defined as non-British Europeans must not be overstated: any non-British group (particularly those who England or Britain shared either sport or other history – i.e. war – with) would be 'othered' in this way. Therefore, it was not specifically *European* threats which were reinforcing Englishness through xenophobic reaction, but more *foreign* menace. For instance, during the 2006 FIFA World Cup, there was a possibility that England could be drawn against Argentina in the semi-finals of the competition. This intrigued Oldham Athletic fans who anticipated the draw more eagerly than the games which England did play, which included European rivals Sweden and Portugal, the latter of whom eventually knocked England out in the quarter finals. The enthusiasm for a match against Argentina became manifest in xenophobic frames. A clear example of this was articulated by Oldham Athletic fan (4):

I'd love it if we beat the cheating Argie b@st@rds. After the Falklands, the hand of god and the [19]98 penalty shootout it'd be like the final had come early.

Oldham Athletic fan (4) (31st June 2006)

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Here, Oldham Athletic fan (4) is articulating that he sees the Argentineans as intrinsically different to the English because they are likely to cheat. He alludes to this as a culturally embedded difference (illegitimate ethno-difference). This follows the pattern that Oldham Athletic fans generally fell into during Euro2004. Indeed, as found in Chapter Four, Oldham Athletic fan (4) argued that the English 'play it fair' therefore emphasising illegitimate cultural traits between nations (by assuming that *others* do not 'play it fair'). While the Argentina discourse did not extend to the 'superior/inferior race' jibes which Oldham Athletic fan (15) referred to, the frame sentiments are very similar. We can infer from this that to be classified as an 'other' to Englishness, outsiders do not have to be European but they do need to share contested historical narratives. Thus, given recent football and political history, the 'other' is as likely to be Argentinean as French. Although Europe does not provide the freedom and threat for smaller club fans in the way that it does for those supporters of clubs who are part of the *Super Club Network*, xenophobic opinion is equally present in both groups, although the expression and circumstances of emergence are qualitatively different. This means that the European identification spun from the *Super Club Network* alters the dynamic of intra-European xenophobia but neither convincingly extinguishes nor fans its flames.

The results in Chapter Five are also very different. In that chapter it was Oldham Athletic supporters who demonstrated a greater propensity to discuss 'Europe' as defined by the EP/EU. The results of the chapter are based upon a smaller sample of comments than Chapters Three and Four, there is still enough data to make some claims about the emergent discourse. It was considered one possible reason for this may be opposition to the BNP, in that some liberal Oldham Athletic fans were showing a wide knowledge of the European institutions and were prepared to engage in Europe-centred political debate. In

this case, a European political consciousness may be at least partly developing through the twin threat of the BNP to, but most obviously through, the European institutions (in the form of claims to withdraw from the EU and gain support through EP elections).

Therefore, following the theoretical template of Castells (2004 [1997]), some Oldham Athletic supporters may be developing *resistance identities* to the BNP which, as a by-product, possibly help to cultivate European political consciousnesses. Yet, it is important to note that this value does not characterise a collective identity of the Oldham Athletic supporter group: the reason why they gathered together was to discuss football, or more specifically, Oldham Athletic and discourse within this field usually produces a group consensus. Yet, although political debate did emerge, the group are not defined by support for one or two political parties as they were with football teams (first, Oldham Athletic, England usually second). Therefore, the BNP and UKIP have some support on *JKL*.

During the sample, Liverpool supporters did not debate EU integration and on this basis, did not seem to display a European political consciousness. Indeed, during early July 2006, an extended *RAOTL* messageboard thread did refer to the BNP. While it was clear that most Liverpool fans were opposed to the ideologies of the far-Right, they did not magically become politically *European*. The reason for this is simple: the BNP-themed thread referred to a *Sun* news article which told readers how fun-park *Alton Towers* was to close to the general public for one day to only allow Muslim-only access. Fans used this event to attack the newspaper as being racist, which was unsurprising given their general disdain for that particular media source. Hence, the BNP and EP were not linked in the way that they may possibly have been in Oldham a little over two years earlier and so did not politically Europeanise supporters.

TWO DISCOURSES OF EUROPE: THE ABSTRACT AND EXPERIENCED

When compared to Chapter Three, the results in Chapter Five show that there is no consistency across two different definitions of *Europe* and the identifications spun from the *Super Club Network* did not produce an identification which provided legitimacy for the European integration movement. This raises interesting questions about the nature of the *Super Club Network* generated identification, specifically whether it can ever produce a culture which can help to overcome the EU's so-called democratic deficit. There are two possible answers which may arise from this book which, given the non-longitudinal nature of the methodology, cannot be argued with any certainty. The first answer is 'yes'. The argument here is that the Liverpool fans' UEFA club competition European identifications were not fully developed, because discursive self-identifications with *Europe* were not articulated (see Chapter Three). This means that at the current intensity, European identifications which can be turned towards European politics have not currently developed, but if this process was to further deepen, it could be used in this way. However, it is more likely is that, in this circumstance, the political and cultural processes do not connect clearly enough to produce an identification which provides political legitimacy. At the heart of this is not necessarily the criticisms of sport given by Adorno and Horkheimer (1944/1992), Chomsky (1983; 2004) or Eco (1986) but that definitions of *Europe* may be too abstract to help to develop a coherent identification.

This means that whilst *Europe* is spelt and *looks* the same in both contexts, its meaning below the surface level is too abstract and not consistent within and across the two groups of supporters. Once again, the work of Bauman (2000; 2005) can be used to illuminate this reasoning. He argues that the liquid modern world has resulted in the identifications produced by national institutions becoming less pervasive than in the established modern

era as the order of global consumerism takes precedence. Consumption involves the use and disposal of particular goods and Bauman (2000: 72-90) argues that this has impacted upon the identifications which relate to external objects or conditions, which have become similarly changeable. This leads us to a second conceptualisation of Europe – that of the experienced. Whilst the ‘explain everything’ discourse of Europe is too broad to be anything other than vacuous, it is important to note that a range of ‘Europes’ – through football, peoplehood and politics – emerge and are part of everyday interactions. In short, Europe should not be taken as some ‘out-there’ or abstract entity (as many academic researchers, journalists and politicians treat it to be) which belongs to others, but is part of many everyday citizens’ lives. Europe exists in football, it exists as a sense of cosmopolitanism and it exists as a political movement. Crucially, Europe – in these contexts - is experienced first hand, often in everyday life practices. Europe is UEFA club competitions (and associated travel) but is also the EU and EP. The two definitions may not be identical but as long as the term is used to describe such experiences, one definition is not more legitimate than any other. The common theme in Chapters Three and Five is that different conceptions of Europe are consumed through a local lens (club based participation in transnational football competition and ways of understanding the local threat offered by the BNP through the EP elections). Therefore, the term *Europe* is taken in one cultural context (i.e. football or politics), used to shape a culture and then disposed. This means that a Liverpool fan may believe his/her team ‘belongs in Europe’ – identifying with the idea – but then show no awareness or political attachment to the EU. Indeed, following Belchem (2000), Lane (1997) and Wilks-Heeg (2003), one conception of Europe may have had a detrimental effect upon such fans in non-football cultural contexts (i.e. the opening up of the EU meant that the geographical importance of Liverpool, as a major port was lessened) yet this does not stop such people enjoying the riches of trans-European club

competitions such as the Champions League or its predecessor, the European Cup. This is markedly different to how Liverpool fans relate to England/Britain, in that one way the enduring impact of Thatcher and other less recent historic events (see Belchem 2000) is manifest is in a disinterest in the national English football team. Given that first, there are no widespread trans-European media and second, aside from the golf Ryder Cup side, there is no European sports team, this has not happened on a continent-wide level. Oldham Athletic fans do not experience these contours of Europe although their knowledge of the EU is born from local political struggles. Once again, this does not necessarily transfer to the popular cultural field of football in a direct fashion but shows that Europe should be conceptually treated as something which is experienced rather than in an exclusively abstract form.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between football and the collective identities/identifications should not be understated. Such identifications can be built around a *European* territory, however it is interesting to question whether this is, first, an inclusive identification, and second, in what ways, if any, such identifications are manifest in other areas of society. Although socio-cultural detachment from the nation-state in unconnected fields to sport are of paramount importance in the development of strong local identifications (see Chapter Three), football also becomes an important site in which identifications can be asserted above the level of nationalism. This chapter has highlighted the role of the *Super Club Network* in transcending national boundaries to produce supporter cultures which occupy a European space. While it is beyond doubt that football offers a potentially productive avenue in which a form of European identifications can develop – it clearly suffices Castells and Ince's (2003: 130) call for mass appeal across Europe - it is interesting to note that the

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forms of European identifications which emanate, in the form of the narratives highlighted in Chapter Three, come from the informal or societal domains rather than official measures which have been developed to foster a trans-European sport-based culture (see Chapter One). It is also the case that the sense of *Europeanness* that is developing from club football is restricted to fans of *Super Club Network* representatives. Group membership is usually restricted to G14 clubs, which constitute the nodes of the European football network society. In the light of this, G14 is developing and reinforcing an imagined 'ever closer union among' some 'peoples of Europe' (Maastricht Treaty, Article A). However, nationalisms simultaneously co-exist for fans of those clubs who are excluded from the network as they continue to identify with cultural representations of the nation-state. It is important to note that whilst the revenue dominance of super clubs is threatening English football's unique 92 league-club culture by polarising wealth away from the majority, such fans are not explicitly resisting the European space. However *Europe* plays little part in their direct supporter experiences. Thus, the European identification which emanates from European club football is clearly exclusionary, in that smaller clubs, such as Oldham Athletic are merely nationally located. Yet, it is also important to note that whilst super clubs detach themselves from the nation from which they hail, the reason they are empowered to the position of the elite is through their nationally-defined television markets. This means that it would be incorrect to consider that the network's nodes – and therefore the attitudes which resonate from supporters - are independent of nation states, but clearly carry cultural values/goals which are, in many respects, as similar to other nationally-defined clubs as others amongst the network.

This identification does not transfer to either the spheres of football-transfer market generated xenophobia or European political legitimacy. Rather such cultures are formed in

an era of global consumerism which has meant that values and identifications are created and used in one cultural context but are not necessarily transferable to others. This means the *Super Club Network*-generated identification probably does not have an obvious socio-political value, although it is likely that this cultural development has not yet reached full fruition. Thus, the long term impacts of this identification may spread into other spheres of social life. Yet, this is merely speculative, and not necessarily predicted given that in the contemporary era of global consumerism, it is likely that identifications are fractured and inconsistent across cultural contexts. The concluding chapter will continue to build upon these themes by explicitly addressing the aims and objectives stated in the Introduction and in doing so, question whether the identifications featured in Chapter Three can create anything more significant than a European identification devoid of any obvious socio-political value.

Conclusion: Getting into Europe - European identifications and football

This book has explored the relationship between football and European identifications, drawing upon a range of themes such as intra-European xenophobia and EU legitimacy and made sense of these using the theories of Manuel Castells and Zygmunt Bauman. As has been recognised throughout the research, the problems encountered when studying culture and collective identifications are not unique to this research. This is principally because of the contested and sometimes contradictory nature of identification - a point which also makes such studies interesting. For example, in the book's introduction, the research question was set out 'to consider whether the experiences related to football fandom may help to develop identifications with various definitions of 'Europe'. Due to the complex nature of 'European identifications', the answer is 'yes, but...'

The need for this clause comes from an assumption that European identifications are both thin and diffuse. The 'yes, but' response highlights the inconsistencies between the composite answers to the research objectives that reflect the complex nature of identification. Here, each research objective will be specifically addressed and drawn together to answer the research question. Then the findings of this research will be reflected upon to question what claims can be made about the relationship between popular cultural and political identifications before future directions in this research area will be considered.

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The first research objective asked whether 'football fans are identifying with the culturally specific idea of Europe' and was mainly addressed in Chapter Three. This chapter found that many Liverpool fans were identifying with trans-European club competition. They articulated identifications through an emphasis on continental fan travel but also recognised the club's dependence upon Champions League revenues and the pride Champions League participation bestows on supporters. These narratives therefore showed how Liverpool supporters would tell immensely positive stories about their trans-European experiences. At the same time, the enduring collective memories of the Heysel disaster meant that Liverpool supporters did not 'other' non-British opposition in the way that existing research has shown that fans of some English clubs might (see King 2000; 2003). This further helped to produce a European identification, although this stayed at a weak level because Liverpool fans did not refer to themselves as 'European' throughout the sample period. Thus, the self-definition dimension of a European collective identification was absent.

However, this culture is significantly stronger than it is amongst Oldham Athletic fans, who, having not seen their team regularly qualify for UEFA competition, have not experienced the 'craic' that trans-European fan travel brings. This articulation of a European identification was attached to a football defined *Europe*; Liverpool supporters had developed this type of identification, whereas Oldham Athletic fans had not.

The second research objective stays with the idea of a European identity as identification with a perception of Europe and asks 'whether *other* manifestations of European identifications – such as those in political discourse – emerge from football fandom'. This objective was answered in Chapter Five, which questioned whether

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Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters had developed European political consciousnesses. This chapter found that neither group was defined by political opinions (as they were by football support) but that Oldham Athletic fans discussed European politics more often than Liverpool supporters on their messageboard. Therefore, Oldham Athletic fans displayed this form of European consciousness, which Liverpool fans did not appear to. However, even amongst the Oldham Athletic collective, there was nothing to suggest that the experience of football fandom helped to develop this type of European alignment, which was only discussed on a football messageboard because it was a virtual space where local people met to talk about a range of subjectively important issues, such as local politics.

The third research objective looked at the issue of xenophobia in English football supporter culture and asked whether the international transfer market had helped to create European 'we' fan identifications towards non-British football players. The results showed that both groups saw non-nationals as *foreigners*, irrespective of whether they were European or not. It was found that football supporters use xenophobic discourse, much like other forms of racism and prejudices (such as those based upon sexuality) to berate opponents and, in times of perceived underachievement, players who are employed by their team. Acceptance of non-white, non-British and/or homosexual players is always ambiguous. *Foreign* players are *outsiders*, and so are easy targets for criticism when the team is performing below the required standard because they are 'different'. Therefore, to answer this research objective, football support, amongst other lived experiences, had made supporters conditionally both xenophobic and cosmopolitan, but convincing European 'we'

identifications have not been formed by either group of fans. In this case, a European identification had not been developed amongst either collective.

The fourth research objective asked how European identifications which emanate from football 'fit' with other territorial cultural expressions, such as national and local identifications and was addressed in Chapters Three, Four and Six. In Chapter Three, it was highlighted how Liverpool supporters had simultaneously rejected Englishness from *above* and *below* and saw football as one avenue to develop or express a resistance to national identification. As Liverpool fans rejected English national identification from *above*, they were belittling the 'small time' nature of English fans. It was argued that this is directly linked to the European narratives because they did not *need* England to experience European fan travel, which instead became an unwelcome distraction to club based issues. Liverpool supporters' rejection of Englishness from *below* related to the social hardship people in the city had endured particularly in the 1980s and the city's longer term history (see Belchem 2000). A range of unflattering stereotypes emerged from the city's relative deprivation throughout the 1980s and the national media's coverage of events (including the emerging Liverpool-based soap operas) which resulted in Liverpool fans feeling that 'Englishness' had *othered* them. This position was strengthened by Thatcher's response to the Heysel and Hillsborough disasters. In return, Liverpool fans *othered* Englishness. This reinforced local attachments but cast England as the 'they/them' group outsiders. In the same chapter, it was highlighted how Oldham Athletic fans mainly saw themselves as English. They did this in three main ways. First, they described themselves as English (*autotypification*), second, they retold positive English narratives and third, they told unfavourable stories about *foreigners* (which

included non-British Europeans). These processes were articulated in relation to football, but may have originated in other areas of national cultural life. In Chapter Four, both Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters told unfavourable and often xenophobic narratives about *foreign* players. In this respect, many Oldham Athletic fans saw xenophobic denigration of others as a way of showing support for Englishness, particularly the English national football team. Chapter Six developed the *Super Club Network* model which showed how fans of the largest football clubs may see their team operate in the more lucrative transnational (European) space and how this may simultaneously create a cultural detachment from the nation, with strong local and weak European identifications developing. Therefore, in the football model, European identifications appear not to be nested within national cultures.

The final objective investigating whether there were any European themed attitudinal differences between 'big' and 'small' club fans. This objective was addressed throughout the book but particularly emphasised in Chapter Six. Although Oldham Athletic supporters more eagerly debated European politics, it was argued that this was less to do with football support and more attributable to local political conditions. The European-themed identifications which will now be referred to are defined through football and were first considered in Chapters Three and Four, but extended in Chapter Six. It was found that Liverpool fans identified more strongly with a UEFA competition defined *Europe* than Oldham Athletic supporters and, in Chapter Six, it was argued that the role of the *Super Club Network* was instrumental because the corporate structures were geared toward the lucrative Champions League. Although fan interpretations of UEFA competition were more associated to supporter travel experiences, the European narratives were also interpretations of the 'we *belong*

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in *Europe*' institutional message. Therefore, large club followers are more likely to experience *Europe* and hear/read in the media that their club 'belongs' in it than small club supporters; so, in this research, Liverpool fans are (in the football-sense) European and Oldham Athletic supporters are not. The *Europe* and *European identification* which emerges from football is highly exclusionary as access to it is achieved by only the largest clubs. Chapter Four pointed out that Liverpool had more non-British European players than Oldham Athletic. This was largely because of its transnational 'scouting system', whereas Oldham Athletic usually employed players who were already in the UK. The larger number of non-British European Liverpool players meant that its supporters were more likely to criticise other Europeans than Oldham Athletic fans were. This criticism was likely to come from claims that such players were 'illegitimate competitors' to local players or that *foreign* players did not 'work' hard enough. When Oldham Athletic employs a non-British player, supporters were less likely to be critical in the way that Liverpool equivalents were about *foreign* signings, as they view such players as having a novel and exotic appeal. This is not to infer that Oldham Athletic fans did not air xenophobic opinions, but these were more likely to be articulated during times when supporters donned their 'England hats' and spoke from the point of view of the national football team. Therefore, in some circumstances, supporters of big clubs were more likely to be 'European', whereas in others, small club fans showed less weak European identifications.

Each objective helps to paint a complicated picture of the relationship between football and European identifications. Hence, due to the complex nature of Europe and its tangent identifications (see Chapter One), a 'yes, but...' answer to the research question is the most accurate that can be given. At the core of this issue is that a

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European identification clearly does not relate to just one 'thing'. Rather, it is based upon infinite number of perceptions and attitudes, which makes it very difficult to calibrate. For instance, it is clear that European political and cultural identifications are not the same. There may also be differences between cultural and political manifestations of Europe.

In Chapter One, it was pointed out that Kumar (2003a) suggested that films, food, sex and continental travel can help to develop European cultures, whereas Borneman and Fowler (1997) added the *Eurovision Song Contest* and Roche (2001), tourism, as experiences and processes that may help to develop European identifications. Trans-European shopping experiences could also be placed on this list, given that activities which promote the physical movement of people can deepen a common European culture. However, what is meant by the emergent identifications is open to interpretation. If a European identification refers to a positive association with a culturally specific perception of Europe, all of the named activities are significant, in the same way that UEFA competition helped to build European narratives. At this point, it is interesting to return to Roche's argument that 'sport is the new religion of the people' (2001: 87) and suggest that although football does help to produce European stories, it is the consumptive activities that fans partake in which really propels this culture. With this in mind, consumption may actually be the 'new religion', but sport plays an active role as one of its most significant churches. Yet, if a European identification is to move beyond this to tackle issues such as the EU's democratic deficit or intra-European xenophobia, there must be large doubts over how much popular cultural consumption can actually achieve, as it is suspected that a European identification has at least three very different expressions

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(identification with Europe in that popular cultural sense, identification with the EU and its associated institutions and a European 'we' feeling that reduces xenophobia). It should not be automatically assumed that the three dimensions are interconnected.

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE BOOK

The main original contribution of this book was to further test King's research (2000; 2003) which looked at the development of a European consciousness amongst Manchester United supporters, by testing this in relation to two other, contrasting, football clubs. This was carried out by looking at the identifications of Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans. In order to do this, King's approach was blended with, in Chapter Four, Rydgren's (2003; 2004) frame analysis methods and Back *et al.*'s understanding of conditional acceptance of 'other' football players to give the book an originality which stretched beyond simple theory-testing. Thus a contribution of the dissertation was that it showed how identifications with various definitions of Europe may not be consistent across cultural contexts. In this sense, Bauman's ideas concerning fractured identities (2000; 2004; 2005) are applied to the contexts of football and European identifications.

An additional smaller, but nevertheless significant contribution of the research is methodological in so far as it takes a step away from traditional data sources to make full use of e-zine discourse as empirical evidence. When the study began, e-zine discourse had not been used in 'Sociology of Sport' research, and to this day, aside from my work, there has only been Ruddock (2005) who has used data generated in this way. After the implosion of the fanzine movement earlier this century, it is important to note that e-zines could be used as an alternative data source.

However, having made these claims, a concession must be inserted that even in a piece of research which began from a theory testing perspective, it is dangerous to generalise the findings of one study (football fandom) which looks at the spectator attitudes of just two football clubs. Therefore, to be able to strengthen these claims, further research has to be conducted.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

From this research, there are a number of emergent research questions which could be addressed in future projects. To begin with a direct link to the book, the conclusions of the research have been deliberately cautious. This was for two reasons. First, as debated in Chapter Two, the extent to which wide claims can be made on the basis of a case study approach is unclear. Elite trans-European football competition has provided Liverpool fans with favourable European narratives, but it is difficult to say if the same experiences would be true of supporters of other *Super Club Network* clubs. The results in this book largely resonated with those provided by King (2000; 2003) but it is entirely possible that Liverpool and Manchester United fans may be 'similar' for reasons which are unconnected to football – it is important to remember that a reason why Liverpool supporters had turned to Europe was to escape from *Englishness* – which may not be shared by other European super club fans. By testing King's theories in relation to a club from a similar British city rather than one which is socially very different, a limitation of this research is exposed. For this reason, if this research were to develop into a monograph, it would be beneficial to also research Arsenal supporters' perceptions and attitudes. This would be an interesting comparison because Arsenal is the third English G14 club (invited into the group in

2002) and regularly qualifies for the Champions League. Yet, it is based in London and so epitomises the way Liverpool fans imagined England. This means that it is questionable whether Arsenal supporters would 'other' Englishness, as Liverpool fans did. In 2005/6, Arsenal surprisingly reached the Champions League final, where they were gallantly beaten by an impressive Barcelona team. In many respects, this would have been the ideal season to monitor Arsenal fans' attitudes to Europe, given that they would have experienced a major European cup final. Yet, I did not manage to carry out this research because of the time constraints afforded by writing up this research and also because a suitable Arsenal e-zine could not be found.⁸⁷

In terms of the non-European super clubs, there are at least two case studies which could be easily explored: Tranmere Rovers and Millwall. The example of Tranmere Rovers is interesting because it is geographically the closest 'small' club to Liverpool, being based on the nearby Wirral peninsula. Although Wirral is not part of Liverpool, it is worth considering whether the local socio-political processes which affected Liverpool fan attitudes have also been experienced by Tranmere Rovers' supporters. If this research was carried out, more certain claims about the impact of football, relative to other urban factors could be made; presently, a limitation of the research is that a comparison between Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters does not allow an empirical separation of football and non-football issues. Millwall's appeal comes from its geographical location, in south-east London, which would suggest that its fans display strong national identities. However, having read Robson's book *'No One Likes Us, We Don't Care': The Myth and Reality of Millwall Fandom* (2000), which elaborates Millwall fan practices using a range of social theories, it would be

⁸⁷ Although I used material from *ArseOnline* fansite (which is part of the 'Rivals' network) in my 2004 pilot study, I did not feel as if the results suggested it was an e-zine in the mould of either *JKL* or *RAOTL*, as many of the contributing fans did not seem to attend live matches.

interesting to find out whether the national media's assumptions that all Millwall supporters are hooligans may have impacted upon discursive identifications. During the summer of 2004, a small amount of Millwall e-zine data was collected and this seemed to suggest that supporters were still strongly identifying with *Englishness* (as the English national football team) but the cultural processes could be further researched, to particularly ask if there is anything which marks Millwall fans as different to 'scouse' Liverpool supporters. The second methodological point returns to an issue which was first considered in Chapter Two. It was pointed out that e-zine material collected over a fourteen month period does not allow claims to be made about *changes* in fan cultures, such as the rate of the possible Europeanisation. Up until the point of analysis, the research had been designed to be able to comment on any longitudinal changes and a sixteen year set of Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fanzines was accumulated to carry out this out. If this project were to be developed further, it would be beneficial to analyse these data sources.

It is also worth pointing out that the identifications of 'Englandfans' could also have been researched in this book and absence of this group provides both a research limitation and a subsequent suggestion for future research. Crabbe (2004) explored the culture within this group and found that, as well as being defined by a thirst for travelling abroad to watch the England national football team, they demarcated themselves as against racist actions associated to the 'hooligan' image of England supporters in the 1980s. Englandfans would be an interesting group to study in that the motivation of escaping hooligan stereotypes were a major reason for their formation, in a similar way to the club-based fanzine movement. However, the major interest in this group comes from the fact that, much like many of the Liverpool

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supporters in this research, they enjoy travelling across Europe (and in the case of the FIFA World Cup finals, occasionally the world) through fan travel. Therefore, identifications of this group may also be fixed upon 'Europe' (even though it is rare that the media talk about England qualifying for or getting into 'Europe'). A further limitation associated to this research is that it is uncertain how these results may be generalised to the wider public, given that the numbers of fans from English football clubs who travel on 'Euro-aways' would be just a few thousand, compared to the population of England which is in excess of 50 million. Perhaps to answer this, the discussion could be returned to Roche's amended claim (2001) that sport was a new religion of Europe, whereby it was suggested that consumption could actually be the new religion with sport an important church. Extending this analogy, perhaps tourism could be adequately described as a cathedral, in which a much greater percentage of England's 50 million regularly visit. With this in mind, perhaps further research could be conducted to look at similar European identifications amongst regular holiday-goers, perhaps facilitated by the rise of low cost airlines.

Aside from deepening this research project, a number of alternative research questions have emerged. First, the relationship between *everyday* political practices and sport has not been extensively researched and the broad nature 'conditional prejudice' which emerges in fan culture is particularly interesting. This interest grows from the second half of Chapter Four, where the conditions of a 'cosmopolitanism of convenience' were considered. This section looked at how fans' deep rooted prejudices emerge under the condition of *threat* (to the club's or national team's prospects etc.). If further research were to be conducted in this area, a good departure point would be to consider whether fans saw some *other* European nations to be more

foreign than others. For instance, it sometimes seemed that Liverpool's Irish full-back, Steve Finnan, was viewed as a home based player whereas non-British Europeans, such as John Arne Riise were more likely to be perceived as *foreign*. Therefore, if a study purely based upon xenophobia were to be conducted, a future researcher should consider refining the player typologies to reflect a less rigid approach to *foreign* players. Xenophobia appeared to be an almost acceptable, hidden prejudice, which was not fully detected by the anti-discrimination football institutions, such as *Kick Racism Out of Football* (even though it is recognised that this organisation was originally set up in the aftermath of Eric Cantona's 'kung-fu' retaliation kick on Crystal Palace supporter Matthew Simmons in 1995) and tangent research projects could be utilised by similar agencies to develop more inclusive football supporter policies.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Throughout this research, it has been maintained that sport (particularly football) is an important site for the representation and construction of collective identities/identifications. This includes the possibility that football can help to create a common European culture, often by providing a vehicle for travel, tourism and other consumptive activities. It is, after all, one of the few popular trans-European leisure activities.

The fact that there is no meaningful European football team reduces this possibility, given that sport-based identifications are often relational. However, sport helps to build collective identities because it produces (often favourable) group narratives. As illustrated in Chapter Three, *Europe* is featured in some of the most enthusiastic fan

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stories (often associated to the excitement provided by European 'away' fan travel). Yet, such narratives do not appear to either reduce intra-European xenophobia or provide legitimacy for the European integration project, which are the most obviously desirable outcomes of a common European culture.

Further, this European identification seems to be restricted to the highest achieving professional clubs, who participate on the European level. This means that this fan culture is highly exclusionary: in England, only four clubs per year qualify for the Champions League (including qualifying rounds) with, usually, another three following in the UEFA Cup. These are often the same teams each year (who become part of the *Super Club Network*). Yet, there are 92 professional clubs in the English football league. Some of the most colourful and interesting narratives come from the experiences of fans of clubs lower down the football pyramid. Indeed, in the summer of 2005, a group of Manchester United supporters were so disillusioned with the financial cost and disenchanting experiences associated following an elite club that they set up their own non-league alternative, FC United of Manchester. They hoped that this would reinstate the enjoyment that had ebbed away from the Old Trafford supporter experience. If the corporate enterprises of elite clubs – which are empowered by Champions League revenues - are losing fan interest, or if they are concentrating the majority of football wealth away from smaller, impoverished professional teams, the cost of a weak form of European identification clearly comes at a significant price.

CHAPTER TWO APPENDIX

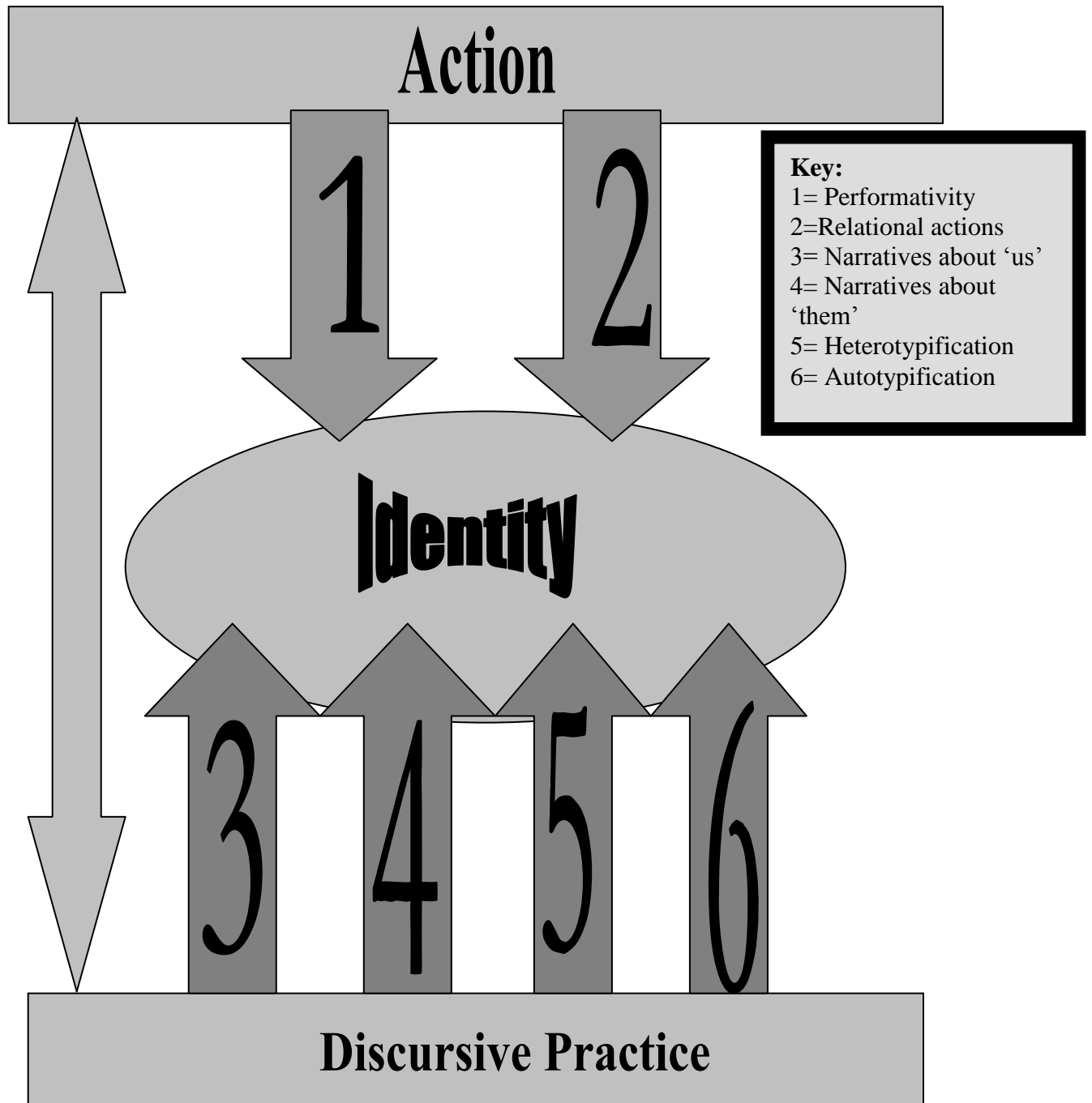


Figure 2. 01 Dimensions of Identity

2/4/2004	7/9/2004	8/2/2005
12/4/2004	16/9/2004	10/2/2005
21/4/2004	24/9/2004	11/2/2005
23/4/2004	26/9/2004	13/2/2005
4/5/2004	28/9/2004	16/2/2005
11/5/2004	30/9/2004	17/2/2005
14/5/2004	3/10/2004	18/2/2005
16/5/2004	4/10/2004	19/2/2005
18/5/2004	17/10/2004	20/2/2005
20/5/2004	18/10/2004	25/2/2005
22/5/2004	19/10/2004	1/3/2005
29/5/2004	25/10/2004	4/3/2005
31/5/2004	27/10/2004	8/3/2005
7/6/2004	8/11/2004	9/3/2005
8/6/2004	11/11/2004	11/3/2005
10/6/2004	18/11/2004	17/3/2005
15/6/2004	30/11/2004	25/3/2005
16/6/2004	3/12/2004	28/3/2005
18/6/2004	4/12/2004	30/3/2005
19/6/2004	5/12/2004	2/4/2005
20/6/2004	13/12/2004	6/4/2005
22/6/2004	17/12/2004	7/4/2005
26/6/2004	18/12/2004	10/4/2005
27/6/2004	21/12/2004	11/4/2005
1/7/2004	27/12/2004	13/4/2005
2/7/2004	28/12/2004	21/4/2005
3/7/2004	4/1/2005	6/5/2005
13/7/2004	14/1/2005	8/5/2005
7/8/2004	16/1/2005	16/5/2005
9/8/2004	22/1/2005	19/5/2005
15/8/2004	25/1/2005	22/5/2005
19/8/2004	27/1/2005	23/5/2005
20/8/2004	29/1/2005	24/5/2005
21/8/2004	1/2/2005	26/5/2005
4/9/2004	2/2/2005	31/5/2005
6/9/2004	3/2/2005	

Table 2. 02 E-zine Random Sample Days

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<i>Month</i>	<i>Liverpool</i>	<i>Oldham Athletic</i>
April	412.00	804.00
May	1085.00	1117.00
June	1020.00	1662.00
July	326.00	259.00
August	721.00	741.00
September	1032.00	709.00
October	932.00	979.00
November	811.00	875.00
December	865.00	1170.00
January	878.00	716.00
February	1574.00	2109.00
March	1205.00	1219.00
April	997.00	1052.00
May	2331.00	1200.00

Table 2. 03 Total Number of messageboard sample comments, by month

<i>Month</i>	<i>Liverpool</i>	<i>Oldham Athletic</i>
April	103.00	201.00
May	120.56	124.11
June	92.73	151.09
July	81.50	64.75
August	120.17	123.50
September	147.43	101.29
October	133.14	139.86
November	202.75	218.75
December	96.11	130.00
January	125.43	102.29
February	121.08	162.23
March	133.89	135.44
April	142.43	150.29
May	259.00	133.33

Table 2. 04 Mean number of messageboard sample comments per day, by month

CHAPTER THREE APPENDIX

	<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Title/Automatic Promotion	13	13.00	18	9.57	41.94	58.06
4th/Play-offs	77	77.00	28	14.89	73.33	26.67
4th/Play-offs - remedial	10	10.00	1	0.53	90.90	9.09
Midtable	0	0.00	8	4.26	0.00	100.00
Midtable - remedial	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Avoid relegation	0	0.00	93	49.47	0.00	100.00
Avoid relegation - remedial	0	0.00	9	4.79	0.00	100.00
Keep the club afloat	0	0.00	31	16.49	0.00	100.00
	100	100.00	188	100.00	34.72	65.28

Table 3. 01 Final league position aims

	<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Positive	294	91.86	8	88.89	97.35	2.65
Negative	26	8.14	1	11.11	96.30	3.70
	320	100.00	9	100.00	97.26	2.74

Table 3. 02 Coding of European Club Competitions

		<u>Liverpool</u>		<u>Oldham Athletic</u>		<u>Row Percentage</u>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
European Club Competition	Pro-European club competition: Affirmative	294	91.88	8	88.88	97.35	2.65
	Pro-European club competition: Remedial	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Anti-European club competition: Affirmative	4	1.25	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	Anti-European club competition: Remedial	22	6.88	1	11.11	96.65	4.35
		320	100.00	9	100.00	97.26	3.74

Table 3. 03 Master 'European club competition' frames

	<u>Liverpool</u>		<u>Oldham Athletic</u>		<u>Row Percentage</u>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
<i>Pro- European club competition: Affirmative</i>						
European away travel provides the finest fan experiences	170	57.82	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
Winner of the Champions League is the best team in Europe	75	25.51	8	100.00	90.36	9.64
European club competition provides the greatest cup excitement	20	6.80	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
Champions League generates revenue that is necessary to the successful running of the club	29	9.86	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	294	100.00	8	100.00	97.35	2.65
<i>Anti-European club competition: affirmative</i>						
Edging toward a European superleague	4	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	4	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
<i>Pro-European club competition: remedial</i>						
	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
<i>Anti-European club competition: remedial</i>						

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Illegitimate claims to superiority	12	54.55	1	100.00	92.31	7.69
Too much stress on potential revenues	10	45.45	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	22	100.00	1	100.00	95.65	4.35

Table 3. 04 How European Club Competition is framed

	<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Positive	28	12.44	169	79.71	14.21	85.79
Negative	178	79.11	41	19.34	81.28	18.72
Apathy	19	8.44	2	0.95	90.48	9.52
Total	225	100.00	212	100.00	51.49	48.51

Table 3. 05 Codes of National Identification

		<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
National Identification	Pro-national identification: Affirmative	28	13.59	113	53.81	19.86	80.14
	Pro-national identification: Remedial	0	0.00	56	26.67	0.00	100.00
	Anti-national identification: Affirmative	27	13.11	15	7.14	64.29	35.71
	Anti-national identification: Remedial	151	73.30	26	12.38	85.31	14.69
		206	100.00	210	100.00	49.52	50.48

Table 3. 06 Master national identification' frames

Getting 'into' Europe

	<u>Liverpool</u>		<u>Oldham Athletic</u>		<u>Row Percentage</u>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
<i>Pro-national identification: Affirmative</i>						
National identity is prevalent during major football tournaments because of support for club players	11	39.28	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
It is fun to support the English football team during major tournaments	5	17.86	23	20.35	17.86	82.14
Patriotism/national pride is a positive force	7	25.00	90	79.65	7.21	92.78
Articulated against other British national identities	5	17.86	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	28	100.00	113	100.00	19.86	80.14
<i>Pro-national identification: Remedial</i>						
Patriotism is not a regressive attitude	0	0.00	56	100.00	0.00	100.00
	0	0.00	56	100.00	0.00	100.00
<i>Anti- national identification: Affirmative</i>						
Nationalism is a regressive attitude	27	100.00	15	100.00	64.29	35.71
	27	100.00	15	100.00	64.29	35.71
<i>Anti-national identification: Remedial</i>						
Rejection because of Margaret Thatcher	35	23.18	0	0.00	100.00	0.00

Getting 'into' Europe

Town/City is not of England	37	24.50	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
National media are xenophobic	14	9.27	11	42.31	56.00	44.00
National identification is an artificial /humanconstruction	2	1.33	15	57.69	11.76	88.24
English football nationalism is for small town inhabitants	14	9.27	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
Our players have been demonised whilst playing for England	3	1.99	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
English team acts as a threat to club interests	25	16.56	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
English football nationalism is for Southern England	11	7.28	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
English football nationalism is for small club fans	10	6.62	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	151	100.00	26	100.00	85.31	14.69

Table 3. 07 How national identification is framed

Getting 'into' Europe

	<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Tension	53	94.64	8	34.78	86.89	13.11
No Tension	3	5.36	15	65.22	16.67	83.33
	56	100.00	23	100.00	70.89	29.11

Table 3. 08 Coding of Club versus County disputes: Are 'internationals' threatening club prospects?

	<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Liverpool: represent nation in Europe	1	3.23	10	34.48	9.09	90.90
Liverpool: Do not represent nation in Europe	5	16.13	1	3.45	83.33	16.67
Other English teams: represent nation in Europe	4	12.90	16	55.17	20.00	80.00
Other English teams: do not represent the nation in Europe	4	12.90	2	6.90	66.67	33.33
Non-national European teams: are national ambassadors	17	54.84	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
European teams: are not national ambassadors	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
	31	100.0	29	100.00	51.67	48.33

Table 3. 09 Coding: do clubs represent their country in European club competition

CHAPTER FOUR APPENDIX

	<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Not Racism: affirm	37	35.92	28	28.00	56.92	43.08
Not Racism: remedial	9	8.74	17	17.00	34.62	65.38
Racism: affirm	7	6.80	1	1.00	87.50	12.50
Racism: remedial	50	48.54	54	54.00	48.08	51.92
	103	100.00	100	100.00	50.74	49.26

Table 4. 01 Liverpool and Oldham Athletic supporters attitudes toward Ron Atkinson's remark about Marcel Desailly

Comments from both sets of fans were broken down into four particular frames. First, there were those who argued that Atkinson was not racist, and what he said was socially acceptable. An example of this is given by Liverpool fan (18):

Some black people call each other "N*gger", does that mean they are racist against themselves? its a descriptive word that causes offence, it doesn't mean the user is a racist.....

My Nan also uses the word alot, she is old School, she is 97 and I wouldn't call her a racist, just ignorant to the modern world.

I'd be surprised if there is ANYONE out there who has never used a descriptive word or phrase that is not 'politically correct'.....Scouse tw@t, big nose c#nt, Cockney w@nker, ginger tosser, black b@stard..... they all mean the same to me, the only difference is the last phrase causes more offence because it is historically linked to the surpression of the blacks by whites. In reality, using that phrase is recognising a physical difference, it isn't a slur against a whole race of people.....

Liverpool fan (18), (22nd April 2004)

Second, there were those such as Oldham Athletic fan (5) who argued that Ron Atkinson was not racist, but remedially referred to his action as slightly inappropriate, or 'daft':

The accusations against Big Ron are nothing short of ridiculous. Even on this board people are calling him a nazi - I mean a nazi, as in national socialist, with gas camps, ethnic cleansing and everything that goes with

that crazy political ideology. So one stupid comment makes him a nazi - i.e. a supporter of killing people because of their race? Get real, Big Ron might be a bit of a bigot, a tad hypocritical and on this occasion very stupid. But a bad man? Or a Nazi? no. no.

Oldham Athletic fan (5), (22nd April 2004)

Third, there were those who argued that Atkinson is racist, but that this is socially acceptable because it is an accepted part of everyday life. An example of this frame is:

I reckon Ron probably is a racist and he can't help himself ...it doesn't make him evil he's no BNP type but at the same time it's got to be shown that his views aren't acceptable.

As for the bleating about PC looniness and so on that usually precedes an excuse/apology for almost anything. Obviously we've heard more about racism recently, since Madrid. But that's the nature of the media, (it's like every minor incident at a level crossing will make the papers at the moment) and it shows racism never went away. Then there is the whole thing that rappers are racist or whatever and that no one condemns them, well they are regularly condemned and they are hardly mainstream media like big ron was, comments like that are just another excuse as far as I can see. If you lived in a country where the elite were all black and there was a lot of anti white stuff out there then you might have a point but if you live in the UK I don't think you need to worry too much about the effects of a few rappers on your chance of getting a job or leading a life unmolested by racism.

Liverpool fan (6), (14th December 2004)

The final frame which was used was that Atkinson's statement was racist and was wrong, therefore remedially framing racism of any form. A given example of this includes Oldham Athletic fan (19):

So is the s***** apologising because he was heard to say it ?
Because he said it ?
Or because he was caught saying it ?

Why don't we ask his "mate" Robbie Earle what he thinks ?
Or better still, the family of Laurie Cunningham who he eulogised about so much when he was at West Brom ?
or Cyrille Regis ?.

The epitome of everything that stinks in this G*d awful, hypocritical country we live in. And the mealy mouthed statement from ITV is almost worse than the comments themselves.

Rot in h"ll,you ignorant,two faced,hideous N*zi [Nazi] B*P [BNP] yob.
Oldham Athletic fan (19), (21st April 2004)

Comment 1: Illustrative comments of racism frames (Table 4.01)

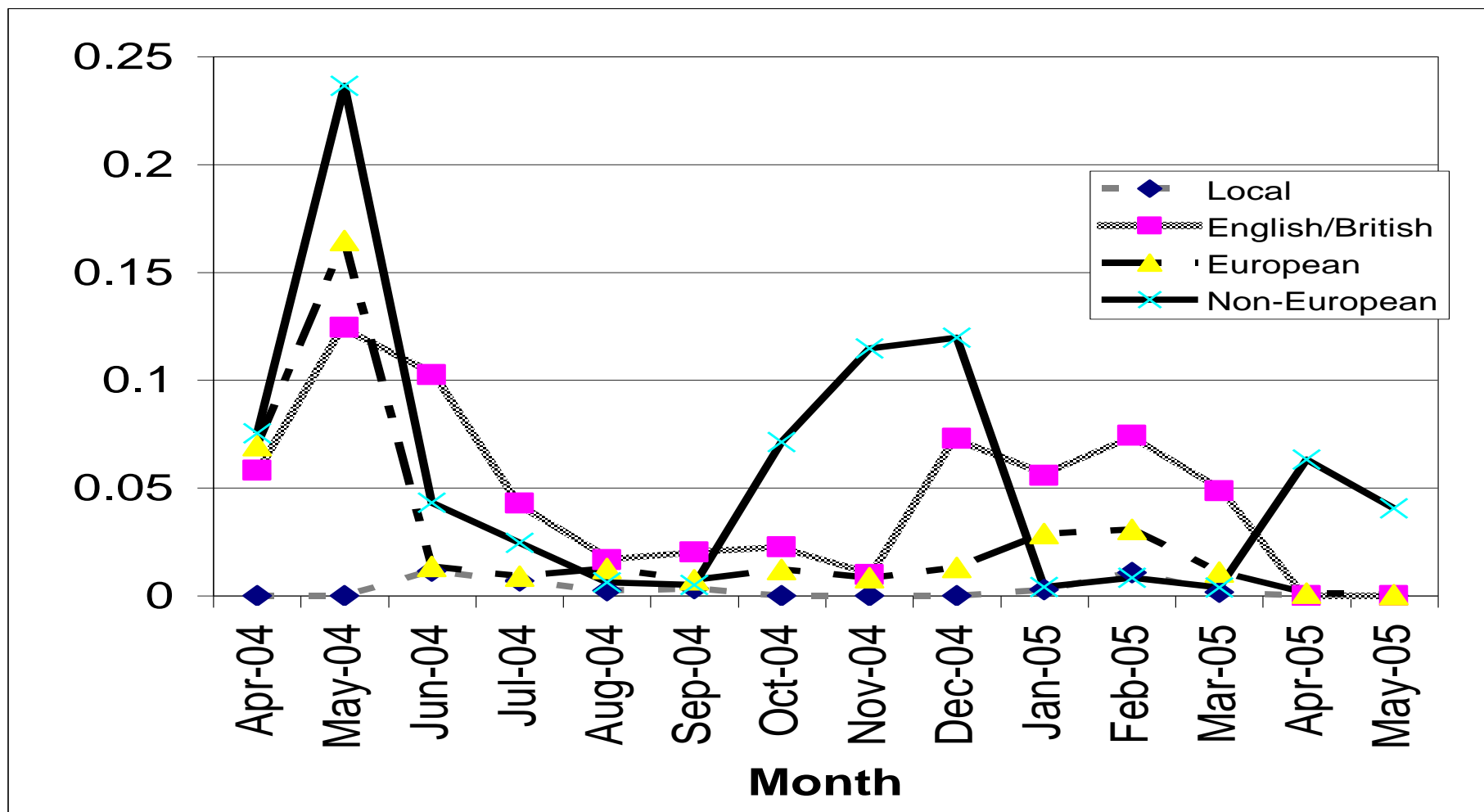


Chart 4.01 Temporal distributions of Liverpool supporter player criticisms.

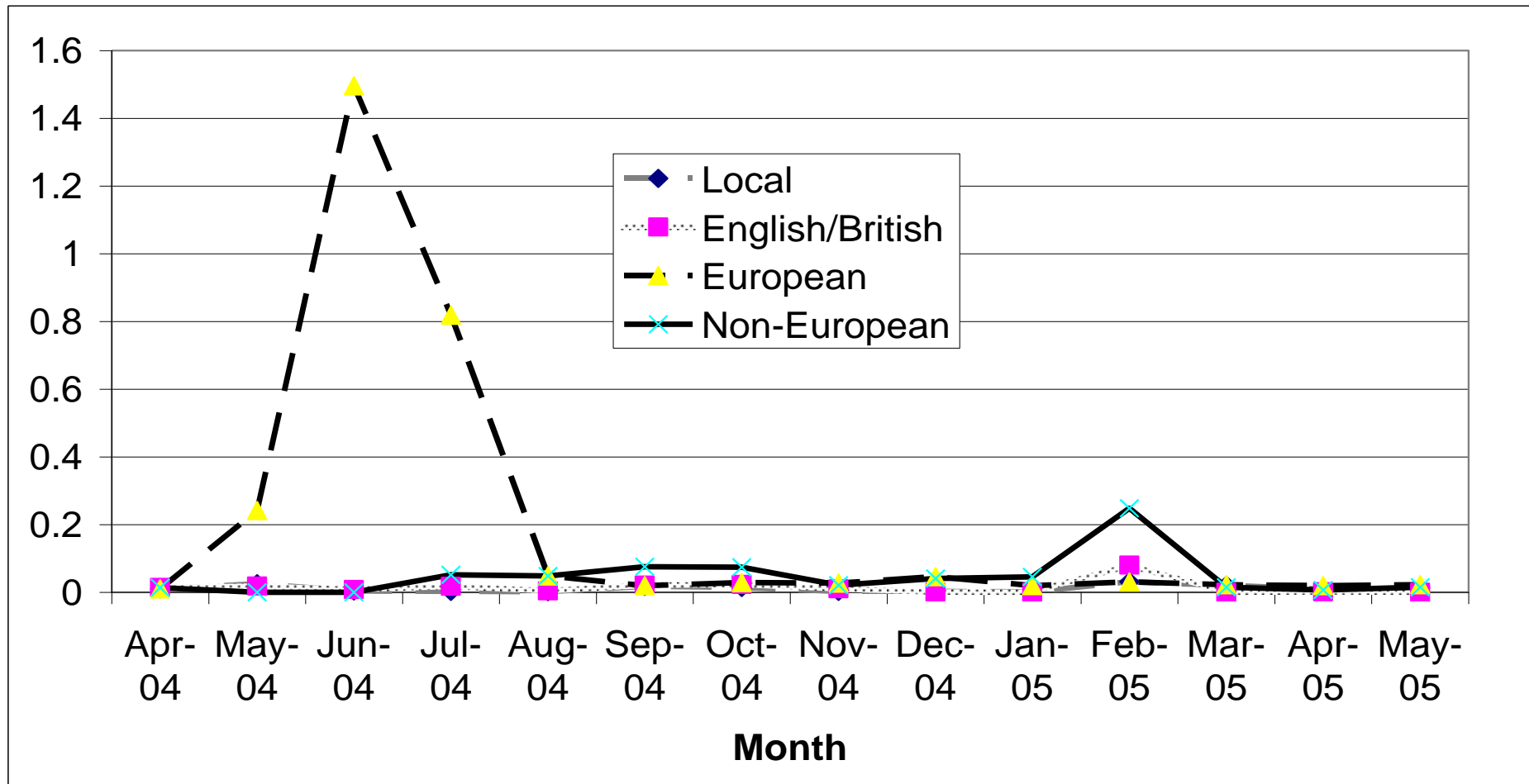


Chart 4.02 Temporal distributions of Oldham Athletic supporter player criticisms.

Liverpool						
Player origin category	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
Local	0	0.00 (14)	0	39	2.79 (14)	76.47
English/British	18	9.00 (2)	28.57	9	4.5 (2)	17.65
Non-national European	24	1.26 (19)	38.10	3	0.16 (19)	5.88
Non-European	21	5.25 (4)	33.33	0	0 (4)	5.88
Total	63	1.62 (39)	100.00	51	1.31 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local	0	0.00 (21)	0	6	0.29 (21)	2.38
English/British	0	0.00 (16)	0	243	15.19 (16)	96.43
Non-national European	222	222.00 (1)	87.06	3	3 (1)	1.19
Non-European	33	11.00 (3)	12.94	0	0.00 (3)	0.00
Total	255	6.22 (41)	100.00	252	6.15 (41)	100.00

Table 4. 02 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Illegitimate Ethno-Difference

Getting 'into' Europe

Liverpool						
Player origin category						
Local	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
English/British	0	0.00 (14)	0	21	1.50 (14)	87.50
Non-national European	21	10.50 (2)	31.81	3	1.50 (2)	12.50
Non-European	24	1.26 (19)	36.36	0	0.00 (19)	0.00
Total	21	5.25 (4)	31.81	0	0.00 (4)	0.00
	66	1.69 (39)	100.00	24	0.62 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local						
English/British	0	0.00 (21)	0	12	0.57 (21)	16.00
Non-national European	9	0.56 (16)	17.65	57	3.56 (16)	76.00
Non-European	12	12.00 (1)	23.53	6	6.00 (1)	8.00
Total	30	10.00 (3)	58.82	0	0.00 (3)	0
Player origin category	51	1.24 (41)	100.00	75	1.83 (41)	100.00

Table 4. 03 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Illegitimate Ethno-Difference

Getting 'into' Europe

Liverpool						
Player origin category						
Local	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
English/British	0	0.00 (14)	0.00	15	1.07 (14)	50.00
Non-national European	0	0.00 (2)	0.00	15	7.5 (2)	50.00
Non-European	18	0.95 (19)	60.00	0	0.00 (19)	0.00
Total	12	3.00 (4)	40.00	0	0.00 (4)	0.00
	30	0.77 (39)	100.00	30	0.77 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local						
English/British	0	0.00 (21)	0.00	0	0.00 (21)	0.00
Non-national European	0	0.00 (16)	0.00	0	0.00 (16)	0.00
Non-European	0	0.00 (1)	0.00	0	0.00 (1)	0.00
Total	0	0.00 (3)	0.00	0	0.00 (3)	0.00
Player origin category	0	0.00 (41)	0.00	0	0.00 (41)	0.00

Table 4. 04 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Ethno-Pluralism

Liverpool						
Player origin category						
Local	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
English/British	0	0.00 (14)	0.00	3	0.21 (14)	100.00
Non-national European	0	0.00 (2)	0.00	0	0.00 (2)	0.00
Non-European	3	0.16 (19)	100.00	0	0.00 (19)	0.00
Total	0	0.00 (4)	0.00	0	0.00 (4)	0.00
	0	0 (39)	100.00	3	0.08 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local						
English/British	0	0.00 (21)	0.00	0	0.00 (21)	0.00
Non-national European	0	0.00 (16)	0.00	0	0.00 (16)	0.00
Non-European	0	0.00 (1)	0.00	0	0.00 (1)	0.00
Total	0	0.00 (3)	0.00	0	0.00 (3)	0.00
	0	0.00 (41)	0.00	0	0.00 (41)	0.00
Player origin category						

Table 4. 05 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Ethno Pluralism

	<u>Liverpool</u>			<u>Oldham Athletic</u>			<u>Row Percentage</u>	
Player origin category	Number	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Number	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Local	99	7.07 (14)	66.00	3	0.14 (21)	33.33	97.06	2.94
English/British	48	24.00 (2)	32.00	6	0.38 (16)	66.67	88.88	11.11
Non-national European	3	0.16 (19)	2.00	0	0.00 (1)	0	100.00	0.00
Non-European	0	0.00 (4)	0.00	0	0.00 (3)	0	0.00	0.00
Total	150	3.85 (39)	100.00	9	0.22 (41)	100	94.34	5.66

Table 4. 06 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Conflict

	<u>Liverpool</u>			<u>Oldham Athletic</u>			<u>Row Percentage</u>	
Player origin category	Number	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Number	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Local	42	3.00 (14)	45.16	6	0.29 (21)	66.67	87.50	12.50
English/British	48	24.00	51.61	3	0.19 (16)	33.33	94.11	5.88
Non-national European	3	0.16 (19)	3.26	0	0.00 (1)	0	100.00	0.00
Non-European	0	0.00 (4)	0	0	0.00 (3)	0	0.00	0.00
Total	93	2.38 (39)	100.00	9	0.22 (41)	100.00	94.34	5.66

Table 4. 07 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Conflict

Liverpool						
Player origin category	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)		Percentage (y)
Local	12	0.86 (14)	2.03	177	12.64 (14)	42.44
English/British	30	15.00 (2)	5.08	18	9.00 (2)	4.32
Non-national European	284	14.95 (19)	48.14	213	11.21 (19)	51.08
Non-European	264	66.00 (4)	44.75	9	2.25 (4)	2.16
Total	590	15.13 (39)	100.00	417	10.69	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local	129	6.14 (21)	32.82	207	9.86 (21)	51.49
English/British	87	5.44 (16)	22.13	126	7.88 (16)	31.34
Non-national European	36	36.00 (1)	9.16	15	15.00 (1)	3.73
Non-European	141	47.00 (3)	35.88	54	18.00 (3)	13.43
Total	393	9.59 (41)	100.00	402	9.80 (41)	100.00

Table 4. 08 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Welfare Chauvinism

Liverpool						
Player origin category	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
Local	9	0.64 (14)	13.04	33	2.36 (14)	14.47
English/British	9	4.50 (2)	13.04	5	2.50 (2)	2.19
Non-national European	24	1.26 (19)	34.78	167	8.79 (19)	73.25
Non-European	27	6.75 (4)	39.13	23	5.75 (4)	10.09
Total	69	1.77 (39)	100.00	228	5.85 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local	0	0.00 (21)	0.00	9	0.43 (21)	13.04
English/British	0	0.00 (16)	0.00	9	0.56 (16)	13.04
Non-national European	0	0.00 (1)	0.00	24	24.00 (1)	34.78
Non-European	45	15.00 (3)	100.00	27	9.00 (3)	39.13
Total	45	1.10 (41)	100.00	69	1.68 (41)	100.00

Table 4. 09 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Welfare-Chauvinism

Liverpool						
Player origin category	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
Local	3	0.21 (14)	1	183	13.07 (14)	64.21
English/British	12	6.00 (2)	4	87	43.5 (2)	30.53
Non-national European	225	11.84 (19)	74.75	12	0.63 (19)	4.21
Non-European	60	15.00 (4)	19.93	3	0.75 (4)	1.05
Total	301	7.72 (39)	100.00	285	7.31 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local	0	0.00 (21)	0	33	1.57 (21)	31.43
English/British	21	1.31 (16)	21.88	63	3.94 (16)	60.00
Non-national European	57	57.00 (1)	59.38	0	0.00 (1)	0
Non-European	18	6.00 (3)	18.75	9	3.00 (3)	8.57
Total	96	2.34 (41)	100.00	105	2.56 (41)	100.00

Table 4. 10 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Illegitimate competitors

Liverpool						
Player origin category	Number (x)	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (x)	Number (y)	Mean number of y comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage (y)
Local	9	0.64 (14)	8.82	78	5.57 (14)	70.27
English/British	15	7.50 (2)	14.71	15	7.50 (2)	13.51
Non-national European	54	2.84 (19)	52.94	9	0.47 (19)	8.11
Non-European	24	6.00 (4)	23.53	9	2.25 (4)	8.11
Total	102	2.62 (39)	100.00	111	2.85 (39)	100.00
Oldham Athletic						
Local	9	0.43 (21)	12	36	1.71 (21)	44.44
English/British	42	2.63 (16)	56	36	2.25 (16)	44.44
Non-national European	24	24.00 (1)	32	0	0.00 (1)	0
Non-European	0	0.00 (3)	0	9	3.00 (3)	11.11
Total	75	1.83 (41)	100.00	81	1.98 (41)	100.00

Table 4. 11 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Illegitimate Competitors

	<u>Liverpool</u>			<u>Oldham Athletic</u>			<u>Row Percentage</u>	
Player origin category	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Local	0	0.00 (14)	0	24	1.14 (21)	13.79	0.00	100.00
English/British	0	0.00 (2)	0	69	4.31 (16)	39.66	0.00	100.00
Non-national European	84	4.42 (19)	90.32	24	24.00 (1)	13.79	77.78	22.22
Non-European	9	2.25 (4)	9.68	57	19 (3)	32.76	13.64	86.36
Total	93	2.38 (39)	100.00	174	4.24 (41)	100.00	34.83	65.17

Table 4. 12 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Economic drain

	<i>Liverpool</i>			<i>Oldham Athletic</i>			<i>Row Percentage</i>	
Player origin category	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Local	6	0.43 (14)	28.57	24	1.14 (21)	18.6	20.00	80.00
English/British	0	0.00 (2)	0.00	90	5.63 (16)	69.77	0.00	100.00
Non-national European	9	0.47 (19)	42.86	6	6.00 (1)	4.65	60.00	40.00
Non-European	6	1.50 (4)	28.57	9	3.00 (3)	6.98	40.00	60.00
Total	21	0.54 (39)	100.00	129	3.15 (41)	100.00	14.00	86.00

Table 4. 13 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Economic Drain

	<u>Liverpool</u>			<u>Oldham Athletic</u>			<u>Row Percentage</u>	
Player origin category	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Local	48	3.43 (14)	11.09	312	14.86 (21)	49.45	13.33	86.67
English/British	87	43.50 (2)	20.09	286	17.88 (16)	45.32	23.32	76.68
Non-national European	226	11.89 (19)	52.19	12	12.00 (1)	1.9	94.96	5.04
Non-European	72	18.00 (4)	16.63	21	7.00 (3)	3.33	77.42	22.58
Total	433	11.10 (39)	100.00	631	15.39 (41)	100.00	40.70	59.30

Table 4. 14 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans adversarial frame football players: Liberal

	<u>Liverpool</u>			<u>Oldham Athletic</u>			<u>Row Percentage</u>	
Player origin category	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Number	Mean number of x comments per player, by territorial category	Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Local	12	0.86 (14)	1.98	134	6.38 (21)	35.83	8.22	91.78
English/British	54	27.00 (2)	8.91	96	6.00 (16)	25.67	36.00	64.00
Non-national European	281	14.79 (19)	46.37	8	8.00 (1)	2.14	97.23	2.77
Non-European	259	64.75 (4)	42.74	136	45.33 (3)	36.36	65.57	34.43
Total	606	15.54 (39)	100.00	374	9.12 (41)	100.00	61.84	38.16

Table 4. 15 How Liverpool and Oldham Athletic fans remedially frame football players: Liberal

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Us' (y)		
1	English/British	17.5
2	Local	15.5
3	Non-European	9
4	European	8
Remedial 'Us' (y)		
1.5	English/British	14.5
1.5	Local	14.5
3	Non-European	11
4	European	10

Table 4. 16 Oldham Athletic fans framing of 'us' (y), by 'the number of counter criticisms each player group received, as a percentage of all counter criticisms' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Us' (y)		
1	Local	18.5
2	English/British	14.5
3	European	11.5
4	Non-European	5.5
Remedial 'Us' (y)		
1	Local	18
2	English/British	13
3	European	11
4	Non-European	8

Table 4. 17 Liverpool fans framing of 'us' (y), by 'the number of counter criticisms each player group received, as a percentage of all counter criticisms' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Them' (x)		
1	Non-European	14.5
2.5	European	13
2.5	English/British	13
4	Local	9.5
Remedial 'Them' (x)		
1.5	English/British	14.5
1.5	Non-European	13.5
3	European	11.5
4	Local	10.5

Table 4. 18 Oldham Athletic fans framing of 'them' (x), by 'the number of criticisms each player group received, as a percentage of all criticisms' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Them' (x)		
1	European	19
2	Non-European	16
3	English/British	9
4	Local	6
Remedial 'Them' (x)		
1	European	19
2	Non-European	14
3	English/British	9
4	Local	8

Table 4. 19 Liverpool fans framing of 'them' (x), by 'the number of criticisms each player group received, as a percentage of all criticisms' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Us' (y)		
1	English/British	15.5
2	Non-European	12
3	Local	11.5
4	European	11
Remedial 'Us' (y)		
1	English/British	13.5
2	European	13
3	Non-European	12
4	Local	11.5

Table 4. 20 Oldham Athletic fans framing of 'us' (y), by 'the number of counter criticisms players in each group were likely to receive over the sample period' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Us' (y)		
1	English/British	18
2	Local	15
3	European	9.5
4	Non-European	7.5
Remedial 'Us' (y)		
1	English/British	16.5
2	Local	14.5
3	European	11.5
4	Non-European	10.5

Table 4. 21 Liverpool fans framing of 'us' (y), by 'the number of counter criticisms players in each group were likely to receive over the sample period' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>

Affirmative 'Them' (x)		
1	European	17.5
2	Non-European	15.5
3	English/British	9
4	Local	8
Remedial 'Them' (x)		
1	European	17.5
2	English/British	13.5
3	Non-European	12.5
4	Local	9.5

Table 4. 22 Oldham Athletic fans framing of 'them' (x), by 'the number of criticisms players in each group were likely to receive over the sample period' rank

<i>Overall Rank</i>	<i>Territory of Origin</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>
Affirmative 'Them' (x)		
1	Non-European	18
2	European	14
3	English/British	12
4	Local	6
Remedial 'Them' (x)		
1	Non-European	17
2	English/British	15
3	European	13
4	Local	8

Table 4. 23 Liverpool fans framing of 'them' (x), by 'the number of criticisms players in each group were likely to receive over the sample period' rank

CHAPTER FIVE APPENDIX

		<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Issue:	<u>European integration</u>						
	Pro-Integration	2	40.00	20	52.63	9.09	90.91
	Anti-Integration	3	60.00	18	47.37	14.29	85.71
		5	100.00	38	100.00	11.63	88.37
	<u>Iraq War</u>						
	Pro-War	0	0.00	2	33.33	0.00	100.00
	Anti-War	13	100.00	4	66.67	76.47	23.53
		13	100.00	6	100.00	68.42	31.58

Table 5. 01 Supporters Coded Attitudes Toward European Integration and war on Iraq

		<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
European Integration	Pro-European: Affirmative	2	40.00	12	32.58	14.29	85.71
	Pro-European: Remedial	0	0.00	8	21.05	0.00	100.00
	Anti-European: Affirmative	3	60.00	18	47.37	14.29	85.71
	Anti-European: Remedial	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		5	100.00	38	100.00	11.63	88.37

Table 5. 02 How Supporters Frame European Integration

Getting 'into' Europe

		<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
European Integration: Pro-European, Affirmative	European Integration Assists Consumerism	2	100.00	1	8.33	66.67	33.33
	Europe is one place, not many	0	0.00	1	8.33	0.00	100.00
	Functions very well as a trading area	0	0.00	8	66.67	0.00	100.00
	Full harmonisation is not necessary	0	0.00	1	8.33	0.00	100.00
	Federalism might be desirable	0	0.00	1	8.33	0.00	100.00
		2	100.00	12	100.00	14.29	85.71

Table 5. 03 Supporter 'Pro European' Affirmative Frames

		<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
European Integration: Anti-European, Affirmative	EU causes immigration	1	33.33	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	EU needs better democratic structure	0	0.00	9	50.00	0.00	100.00
	Federalism would be bad	0	0.00	1	5.56	0.00	100.00
	Integration movement should not interfere with sport	2	66.67	6	33.33	25.00	75.00
	British not 'European'	0	0.00	1	5.56	0.00	100.00
	EU is faceless	0	0.00	1	5.56	0.00	100.00
		3	100.00	18	100.00	14.29	84.71

Table 5. 04 Supporters 'Anti-European' Affirmative Frames

Getting 'into' Europe

		<i>Liverpool</i>		<i>Oldham Athletic</i>		<i>Row Percentage</i>	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
European Integration: Pro-European, Remedial	European Integration does not cause unemployment	0	0.00	3	37.50	0.00	100.00
	'Euro' currency does not create national economic problems	0	0.00	2	25.00	0.00	100.00
	European Integration does not create immigration	0	0.00	1	12.50	0.00	100.00
	EU Immigrants are not draining the state	0	0.00	2	25.00	0.00	100.00
		0	100.00	8	100.00	0.00	100.00

Table 5. 05 Supporters 'Pro-European' Remedial Frames

		Liverpool		Oldham Athletic		Row Percentage	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
Party:	<u>Labour Party</u>						
	Pro-Labour	1	0.25	10	52.63	9.09	90.91
	Anti-Labour	3	0.75	9	47.37	25.00	75.00
		4	100.00	19	100.00	17.39	82.61
	<u>Conservative Party</u>						
	Pro-Conservative	0	0.00	3	50.00	0.00	100.00
	Anti-Conservative	47	100.00	3	50.00	94.00	6.00
		47	100.00	6	100.00	88.68	11.32
	<u>UKIP</u>						
	Pro-UKIP	0	0.00	2	50.00	0.00	100.00
	Anti-UKIP	3	100.00	2	50.00	60.00	40.00
		3	100.00	4	100.00	42.86	57.14
	<u>BNP</u>						
	Pro-BNP	0	0.00	14	26.92	0.00	100.00
	Anti-BNP	0	0.00	38	73.08	0.00	100.00
		0	0.00	52	100.00	0.00	100.00
	<u>Non-Vote</u>						
	Evidence	7	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0.00
	Opposed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		7	100.00	0	0.00	100.00	0.00

Table 5. 06 Supporters Coded Views on UK Political Parties

		Liverpool		Oldham Athletic		Row Percentage	
		Number	Column Percentage	Number	Column Percentage	Liverpool	Oldham Athletic
British National Party (BNP)	Pro-BNP: Affirmative	0	0.00	7	13.46	0.00	100.00
	Pro-BNP: Remedial	0	0.00	7	13.46	0.00	100.00
	Anti-BNP: Affirmative	0	0.00	38	73.08	0.00	100.00
	Anti-BNP: Remedial	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
		0	0.00	52	100.00	0.00	100.00

Table 5. 07 How Supporters Frame The British National Party

		Oldham Athletic	
		Number	Column Percentage
British National Party (BNP)	Legitimate Policies	4	57.14
	Invoke Patriotism	3	42.86
		7	100.00

Table 5. 08 Supporter 'Pro BNP' Affirmative Frames

		Oldham Athletic	
		Number	Column Percentage
British National Party (BNP)	Illegitimate Ideology	17	44.74
	Illegitimate Policies	7	18.42
	Manipulate Voters	10	26.32
	'Bad' Individual Members	3	7.89
	Illegitimate Usage of Slogans	1	2.63
		38	100.00

Table 5. 09 Supporters 'Anti-BNP' Affirmative Frames

		Oldham Athletic	
		Number	Column Percentage

British National Party (BNP)	No Ideological Issues	3	57.14
	Misquoted	1	14.29
	Have not 'hijacked' national flags	1	14.29
	Entitled to free speech	2	28.57
		7	100.00

Table 5. 10 Supporters 'Pro-BNP' Remedial Frames

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