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Football, The World's Game: A Study on Football's Relationship with Society

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CLAREMONT McKENNA COLLEGE
FOOTBALL, THE WORLD'S GAME: A STUDY ON FOOTBALL'S
RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY

SUBMITTED TO

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AND

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BY

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Abstract

This paper looks at the way football affects society. Analysis includes a look into football in Victorian England, the notorious Glaswegian Rangers-Celtic rivalry as well as the role of football in the United States during the late 20th century.

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Introduction

“Some people believe football is a matter of life and death. I am very disappointed in that attitude. I can assure you, it's much, much more important than that.”¹ - Bill Shankly

This observation by Bill Shankly, Liverpool Football Club's legendary manager, holds a lot of truth. All around the world, fans pack into stadiums weekly to cheer on their favorite team. Judging by how emotionally charged the fans get, the game does seem more important than life and death. In fact, the motivation for this paper is a result of my own love affair with football. This love affair began when, at age four, my father presented me with my first football and started teaching me the nuances of the game. From that point forward, my love for 'the beautiful game' has only strengthened. Every weekend, I find myself waking up at 'ungodly hours' just to watch my favorite team, Manchester United, try to put a ball into the back of a net. On one such morning, when I woke up at 5 am to catch a normal league game, I started wondering why football has been able to have such a hold over me. This question lead me to further contemplate what sort of effect this game has on society at large when so many people are just as (if not more) crazy than me about football.

Sports as a Cultural Artifact

Sports, especially mass spectator sports, are hugely important cultural artifacts. That is, it reflects a society's culture in “unique and important ways”². Sports arguably hold a higher cultural significance than other artifacts such as movies, paintings or music

¹ David Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round: a global history of soccer* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2008), 1.

² Richard K. Olsen Jr., “Sports as Cultural Artifact,” in *Sports in American Culture: From Ali to X-Games*, ed. Joyce Duncan, XIII (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2004).

because they actively engage participants and foster constant interaction between people witnessing the spectacle. How often does one hear the entire audience in a cinema screaming at the screen? How often does one see complete strangers at an art gallery embracing each other with tears streaming down their face because of the beauty of a painting? In sports stadiums, however, you would see fans screaming down at a team in unison, creating a strong imagined community for all those involved. Moreover, we frequently see complete strangers (even people from diverse socioeconomic groups) embracing each other if their team scores a goal. These are precisely the qualities that make studying sports so fascinating.

To understand how sports are able to serve as a cultural artifact, we must first define culture, which is the “total system of meanings within which groups of people live their lives”³. Sports confer to this ‘total system of meanings’ as it often has multiple levels of significance. At its most basic level, people engage in sports to stay healthy. The type of sport that a group of people chooses to engage in, however, tells us a lot more about their culture than just their desire to stay fit. The development of baseball, often labeled ‘America’s Favorite Pastime’, provides us with a striking example. Throughout the early 1800s, cricket was actually much more popular in the United States than baseball⁴. By the mid 1800s, however, baseball had emerged as America’s game. The reason for this ‘crowding out’ of cricket was due to the political climate at the time. Rise of “sectionalism in the South” and the prospect of civil war caused Americans to fear for

³ Richard K. Olsen Jr., “*Sports as Cultural Artifact*,” XIII.

⁴ George B. Kirsch, *Baseball in Blue and Gray: The National Pastime during the Civil War* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2004), 16.

the solidarity of the country⁵. Moreover, there was a flaring of xenophobia due to a huge influx of immigrants from Europe. Culturally, this was also a period where Americans “strove for a literary and artistic independence from European (and especially British) influence that would match their political separation from the Old World”⁶. Due to these currents, baseball, which was thought of as a sport that originated from America, eclipsed cricket⁷. When some sections of society suggested that baseball was evolved from the British game of rounders, Americans responded by creating the Doubleday myth. This legend states that Abner Doubleday, who was a decorated civil war hero, personally invented the game. As sociologists Andrei S. Markovits and Steven L. Hellerman explains, “pride and patriotism required the game to be native, unsullied by English ancestry” and “baseball devotees found it increasingly difficult to swallow the idea that their favorite pastime was of foreign origin”⁸. By placing baseball solely in the American domain, its popularity soared and eventually became ‘America’s Favorite Pastime’.

The cultural significance of sports also transcends time, as we see that baseball still plays a central role in American society and reflects American values. This role of baseball is apparent when we juxtapose it with why football [soccer] does not hold a similar role in American society. American essayist Chuck Klosterman, who has written extensively on U.S popular culture, argues that mainstream Americans love baseball and hate soccer because American society is individualistic and meritocratic (values that

⁵ Kirsch, “*Baseball in Blue and Gray*,” 16.

⁶ Kirsch, “*Baseball in Blue and Gray*,” 16.

⁷ Kirsch, “*Baseball in Blue and Gray*,” 17.

⁸ Andrei S. Markovits and Steven L. Hellerman, *Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 54.

Americans often celebrate to distinguish themselves from the Europeans)⁹. Thus, mainstream Americans are “never going to care about a sport where announcers inexplicably celebrate the beauty of missed shots and the strategic glory of repetitive stalemates”¹⁰. Instead, he explains that most mainstream Americans (including himself) appreciate watching something where the winners are clearly distinguished:

“We want to see domination. We want to see athletes who don’t look like us, and who we could never be. We want to see people who could destroy us, and we want to feel like that desire is normal. But those people don’t exist in soccer; their game is dominated by mono-monikered clones obsessed with falling to their knees and ripping off their clothes”¹¹

While I personally disagree with his view on football, it is clear that the influence of sports transcends time. Baseball has continuously played a similar role for U.S society over the last century by helping the U.S celebrate what is seen as ‘American values’.

Football and Society

So what makes football a fruitful area to study? As we saw with baseball, other sports also give us important insights into a society. However, it is football’s global presence, which makes it arguably more important than other sports. Few sports in the world play a central role in as many societies as football does. German sociologist Norbert Elias suggests that football is a particularly useful tool to analyze society as it “represents exceptional but also highly regulated areas of human interaction”¹². By this,

⁹ That is not to say, however, that football [soccer] does not play an important part in American society. This point will be explored later in this paper

¹⁰ Chuck Klosterman, *Sex Drugs and Cocoa Puff: A Low Culture Manifesto* (New York: Scribner, 2004), 89.

¹¹ Klosterman, “*Sex Drugs and Cocoa Puff*,” 89.

¹² Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning *Quest for Excitement: Sport and leisure in the civilizing process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) cited in Sybille Frank and Silke Steets, *Stadium Worlds: Football, Space and the Built Environment*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 2.

he means that football is both unpredictable (because there is an infinite number of variations in play that the eleven players on each team can create) yet still somewhat predictable as it is constrained by a set of rules. Although this argument could be applied to most other sports, the unpredictable element in football is greater than most. Firstly, the game of football has very few play stoppages, especially when compared to sports such as basketball, which has four different quarters as well as time outs. The longer that play is uninterrupted, the higher degree of unpredictability the sport has. Moreover, football constantly pits ‘premier’ teams against minnows through their cup competitions. This variability in a team’s competition means that a squad of semi-professionals or amateurs could beat a team of millionaire athletes in a significant contest with a whole nation watching. In sports such as baseball or basketball, however, this ‘haves versus have-nots’ scenario would never take place. One would never see an NBA (National Basketball Association) team play against a NBDL (National Basketball Development League) in a significant competition (and both these leagues are professional leagues). There is no chance that a NBA team would have to face off against a team of semi-professionals or amateurs. Elias argues that it is precisely this unpredictability, which adds to the complexity of football and makes it culturally and historically significant as it mirrors the “complexity of modern, highly civilized societies in general”¹³.

Football also became an outlet for the tensions created by modern society. Elias suggests that football was created as a consequence of the modern industrial society’s high degree of social sensibility, which makes for a very repressive atmosphere¹⁴. This

¹³ Elias and Dunning, “*Quest for Excitement*,” cited in Frank and Steets, “*Stadium Worlds*,” 2

¹⁴ Elias and Dunning, “*Quest for Excitement*,” cited in Frank and Steets, “*Stadium Worlds*,” 2

repression came in the form of suppressing emotion as one was expected to “check the rising upsurge of their excitement in good time [or anger in bad times]”¹⁵. Of course, when people constantly repress their emotions, the result is lots of tension and instability. Football, however, allowed for a release of such pent up emotions, as it is independent of the highly regulated realm of work. Football pitches and stadiums in effect became ‘enclaves of autonomy’ where people could engage in “socially approved arousal of moderate excitement behavior in public”¹⁶.

Despite the important role football plays all over the globe, historians tend to “separate what is obviously connected: football and history, sports and politics, the game and money”¹⁷. For example, it is highly unlikely that one could open a textbook on England and find any more than a few paragraphs discussing football. Unsurprisingly, when scholars do look closely at football, they find fascinating stories.

A prime example would be the pre-Second World War rivalry between Spartak and Dinamo, two clubs based in Moscow. Sports historian Robert Edelman explored this rivalry in his article *A Small Way of Saying No: Moscow Working Men, Spartak Soccer and the Communist Party*. This rivalry became a symbol of the people versus the Party as Dinamo was founded by the secret police while Spartak was independent of the state. Unsurprisingly, Dinamo was a symbol of the “the hated elites” while Spartak became the ‘people’s team’¹⁸. Spartak was also aptly named after Spartacus, the Roman hero that led the slaves to revolt against the haves. Similarly, the exploited workers who were forced

¹⁵ Elias and Dunning, “*Quest for Excitement*,” cited in Frank and Steets, “*Stadium Worlds*,” 2

¹⁶ Elias and Dunning, “*Quest for Excitement*,” cited in Frank and Steets, “*Stadium Worlds*,” 3

¹⁷ Goldblatt, “*Ball is Round*,” 5.

¹⁸ Robert Edelman, “A Small Way of Saying “No”: Moscow Working Men, Spartak Soccer, and the Communist Party, 1900-1945” *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, no. 5 (2002): 1454.

into collectivization and labor wanted to revolt against the all-powerful Stalinist state. The symbolic significance of Spartak was apparent when one fan explained, “Spartak was the home team of ordinary people. Why? The name had meaning for us. Then all the kids and even the grown-ups knew the name of the leader of the slave revolt in ancient Rome. How could the names of the other teams compare?”¹⁹ Because the 1930s was an era of “scarcity and uncertainty”, the authorities were often anxious about potential revolts. Therefore, the secret police quickly clamped down on any dissident views. Since football stadiums were ‘enclaves of autonomy’, however, they became one of the only spaces where one could scream, “kill the cops” without major repercussions²⁰. Thus, by supporting Spartak, workers were able to express their anger against the state and form group solidarity, two tasks that would seem impossible under a draconian society.

Colonial Zanzibar provides another interesting example as to how football affects society. In historian Laura Fair’s article ‘*Kickin' It: Leisure, Politics and Football in Colonial Zanzibar, 1900s-1950s*’, we learn that football served two very different purposes for the British colonialists and native Zanzibarians. The British colonialist introduced football to Zanzibar because they felt that they could teach ‘modern values’ to the ‘lazy’ Zanzibar natives. Most importantly, the British wanted to teach the natives “respect for discipline and authority” so that they could become productive members of the empire²¹. To teach these values, the Zanzibar Football Association only allowed Europeans to become referees, thereby forcing natives to learn how to respect European

¹⁹ Edelman, “A Small Way of Saying ‘No,’” 1454.

²⁰ Edelman, “A Small Way of Saying ‘No,’” 1454.

²¹ Laura Fair, “*Kickin' It: Leisure, Politics and Football in Colonial Zanzibar, 1900s-1950s*,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 67, no. 2 (1997): 224.

authority. The Zanzibarians, however, saw their ability to challenge or disagree with the referee's decision as challenging the colonial power structure, which had the natives at the bottom of the social ladder. As Fair suggests, "by boycotting matches and haranguing referees, Zanzibari footballers were clearly articulating their opposition to the administration's proposition that European authority and decision making were above reproach"²². Football was one of the few realms in which a native could challenge the colonial authorities. Otherwise, they certainly were not able to defy officials in public without major recourse.

From these two examples, we see that football has a truly global influence. So what explains football's popularity all over the world? Britain's role as ruler of the 'empire on which the sun never sets' certainly played a part in the dissemination of football. Yet, this reason alone does not explain why other British sports such as rugby or cricket did not manage to reach similar heights. Moreover, football took off in places such as Latin America, where Britain had no real influence over. One reason for football's popularity lies in its simplicity. All one needs is relatively flat land with markers to stand in for goals and a ball to start a game. Sports such as cricket, on the other hand, require much more equipment, such as bats, that would price out many poorer potential participants. Football's simplicity also extends to its rules. When the rules of football were written in 1863, there were only fourteen rules and there have been very few changes since then²³. As a comparison, rugby began with fifty-nine rules. Thus, this

²² Fair, "Kickin' It: Leisure," 235.

²³ Patrick Murphy, John Williams and Eric Dunning, *Football on Trial: Spectator Violence and Development in the Football World* (London: Routledge, 1990), 3.

simplicity made football easy for people to understand, which contributed to its popularity.

For this paper, I have decided to focus on three countries, England, Scotland and the United States. In England, I will look at the class tensions that were created in Victorian society during the professionalization of football. In Scotland, I will explore one of the most notorious football rivalries in the world, the rivalry between Glasgow Rangers and Celtic Football Club. In this section, I will particularly focus on the late 1800s and early 1900s. This rivalry provides insight into the sectarian tensions that existed in Glasgow during this era. The last chapter will investigate the role of football (or soccer, as it is commonly known to Americans) in the United States during the 1980s and 1990s. The United States may seem like an odd selection for a study of football's effect on society, as Americans are rarely, if ever, considered 'football fanatics'. If we look deeper, however, we see that football played a huge role for Yuppies, women and minorities- three major groups in U.S society. In all three cases, we will find that football served a similar purpose as it did in the Soviet and Zanzibar example as it allowed different groups to release their anger, anxieties and fears. Moreover, football allowed different groups in society to differentiate themselves from others in a relatively depoliticized manner. Thus, football serves as a pressure release valve for society and "enables the much more regulated civilized everyday social order beyond the sporting event to remain intact"²⁴.

²⁴ Frank and Steets, "*Stadium Worlds*," 3.

Chapter 1: Football and Victorian English Society: The People's Game?

“Now came a most determined onslaught by the Lancashire team [Blackburn Olympic], and the downfall of the Etonian goal seemed inevitable. The ball was worked away, however, and a fine run down the ground by the light blue forwards ended in Goodheart sending the ball underneath the bar!”¹

This match report from the *The Times* chronicled one of the most significant football matches ever played. On April 2nd 1883, the Blackburn Olympians, a symbol of the working class, won the Association Challenge Cup by triumphing over the upper class Old Etonians two goals to one. The Old Etonians, as their name suggests, consisted of elites². The Blackburn squad, meanwhile, consisted of three weavers, a spinner, a dental assistant, a textile factory hand, and an iron foundry worker; their captain was a master-plumber³. The beginning of the match was a tense affair as neither team gave each other so much as a sniff at goal. The Blackburn Olympic, however, started launching a constant assault on their opponents' goal and finally put the ball into the Old Etonians net. This was the first time a working class team defeated the elites in a significant competition!

¹ *The Times*, “The Association Challenge Cup,” April 02, 1883.

² The term ‘elites’ includes the aristocratic and upper middle class members of English society who were educated in elite institutions such as Eton, Harrow or Winchester

³ William Baker, “The Making of a Working-Class Football Culture in Victorian England” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Winter, 1979): 243.

Introduction

Football, commonly known as ‘the people’s game’, has always been an integral part of English society. As Joseph Strutt, a scholar of English pastimes, once said, “In order to form a just estimation of the character of any particular people, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the Sports and Pastimes most generally prevalent among them”⁴. Thus, in order to truly understand English society, we must explore football. By studying the development of football in the late 19th and early 20th century, we will be able to gain an insight into the currents of late Victorian England. The focus of this paper, in particular, will center on the class tensions created during the development of professional football and its effects on society. I will also look to challenge the notion of football being ‘the people’s game’, as it served a much larger purpose than just for the amusement of the working class. Moreover, I will juxtapose the development of football with rugby, which gives us insight into the anxieties facing the bourgeoisie of Victorian society.

The Development of Football

The modern game that we know as football significantly differed to the form being played in the early 19th century. During this period, ‘folk football’ was played on a much larger scale than the modern game and often involved around 1,000 men per side⁵. Goals were usually set many miles apart. For example, in Whitehaven, a small town on the coast of Cumbria, one goal was set at the docks while the other was outside of town⁶. This form of football was also ultra violent, as one observer explained, “breaking

⁴ Joseph Strutt, *The Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (London: 1841), xvii.

⁵ Tony Collins, *Rugby’s Great Class Split: Class, Culture and Origin of Rugby League Football*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1.

⁶ Collins, “*Rugby’s Great Class Split*,” 1.

windows, striking bystanders, the ball driven into houses; and such shinning, as they called kicking each other's legs. It was quite common to see these up and down towners kicking each other's shin when the ball was hundred yards away"⁷. Moreover, death was a common occurrence.

The more organized form of football that closely resembles the one we see today evolved out of the broad-church movement. This movement, which emerged in the early to mid 1800s, was born out of a period of doubt over the Christian doctrine because of the findings of natural scientists and ideas of German theologians⁸. The broad-church movement sought to reconcile Christianity and science. Intellectuals of the movement achieved this by applying scientific logic in the ways they thought about God and stopped taking the writings of the bible literally. Instead, they saw stories in the bible as metaphors that could be applied to everyday life, forming a more practical branch of Christianity⁹.

Developing from the broad-church movement was muscular Christianity, which believed that ideals of a Christian gentleman could be transmitted through sports such as football. This movement was most closely associated with public schools. According to Charles Kingsley, one of the most influential leaders of muscular Christianity, these ideals included "temper, self-restraint, fairness, honor and unenvious approbation of

⁷ Collins, "Rugby's Great Class Split," 1.

⁸ William E. Winn, "Tom Brown's Schooldays and the Development of 'Muscular Christianity'," *Church History*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1960): 64.

⁹ Peter B. Landow, "The Broad Church Movement," The Victorian Web, <http://www.victorianweb.org/religion/brdchrch.html> (accessed March 15, 2011).

another's success". These virtues could only be taught on the playing field¹⁰. In football, these ideals translated to showing respect for an opponent by applauding them when they showed a nice piece of skill or a good performance. This sportsmanly behavior was also demanded of the spectators who were expected to show their appreciation to both teams. Moreover, the ultra violent nature of folk football gave way to physical contact constrained by rules, as following regulations resonated with the ideals of temperance and self-restraint. That is not to say, however, that football was not physical. It was the following of rules under the physical battle that is football, which fostered temperance. Having a healthy body was also linked to having a healthy mind. Since this change in the nature of football manifested in the elite public schools, the more organized modern form of football was considered an elite domain. In fact, the elites dominated football until the late nineteenth century. Between 1872 and 1882, the Wanderers, a team of former public school and university students, won the Football Association Challenge Cup five times while the Old Etonians won two.

The elites' domination of football until the late 19th century was a result of working men not having the time, space and health to pursue leisurely activities. From Monday to Saturday, the workers worked full time meaning that they could not pursue football. On Sundays, playing football during the day conflicted with church and playing at night was not possible for lack of illumination or natural light. Thus, elites were the only ones who had the time to cultivate football seriously. Another reason for the elites' exclusive control over football was because of the living conditions that the working

¹⁰ Nick J. Watson, Stuart Weir and Stephen Friend, "The Development of Muscular Christianity in Victorian Britain and Beyond," *Journal of Religion and Society*, Vol. 7 (2005): 2.

class faced. The Industrial Revolution caused a huge surge of workers migrating to cities. For example, in a span of forty years, from 1860 to 1899, London's population had almost tripled (in 1861 population was 2,803,989. By 1899, population was 6,528,434¹¹)! This sudden explosion of population created a lack of space for many of London's working class families. Typically, a Victorian working class compound consisted of a court, which was about ten feet wide, and contained houses of four, six and eight rooms while the backyards were only three feet in length and four in width. This lack of open space meant that even if the working class found time for football, they did not have enough space to play. Hygiene was also highly neglected in these compounds as the water source was usually placed next to the dustbin while drains were next to the ground floor window. Given that so many of the working class had to live in such unhealthy environments, it was not surprising that they were not physically strong and fit enough to match up against the elites in football (or any other sport for that matter). The dangers of living in such horrendous conditions were encapsulated by a working class woman, who, when asked about the spread of fever in her neighborhood, replied "two died opposite last Tuesday, and two at the end on Saturday: we've not much now"¹². This chilling response showed that in working class slums, people were more likely to die from fever than to recover from them.

The People's Game

The Artisan's and Laborers' Dwellings Improvement Act 1875 began incorporating the working class into the game of football. This piece of legislation sought

¹¹ London Online, "London Population" London Online, <http://www.londononline.co.uk/factfile/historical/> (October 5, 2009)

¹² Octavia Hill, "Why the Artisan's Dwellings Bill was Wanted" in *Homes of the London Poor*, (London: Macmillan, 1883).

to redevelop areas that the working class lived in. One aim of this reform was to increase the amount of open spaces in the cramped slum like neighborhoods, which the reformer Octavia Hill described¹³. Due to the crowded nature of these dwellings, parks that were created were usually confined spaces that were fenced unlike the open spaces that existed in the rural villages. Football was, logically, one of the few sports that allowed a large group of people to exercise in a confined space and enjoy what little leisure time that they had.

Mass migration into urban centers stemming from industrialization also helped increase the popularity of football amongst the working class. Many workers that were new to industrial cities began vehemently supporting their local club as it gave them a sense of belonging. Before the Industrial Revolution, workers lived in villages or parishes and had a strong community spirit where they could sing songs and celebrate together. The rise of football clubs allowed the workers to once again pursue these activities and inter village rivalries were now replaced by inter club rivalries. Having such competitions is important in helping a community develop a sense of pride as it creates an ‘other’ for the community to group together against. In addition, new modes of transportation such as trains and trams allowed the working class to easily access their local clubs. An example of this is seen in the *Fabian Tracts*, a British Socialist publication, where there was an ad notifying readers that trains going to Brighton United Football Club had a fare discount for match day¹⁴.

¹³ Octavia Hill, “*Artisan’s*”

¹⁴ *Fabian Tract No. 137*. March 1908. London: Fabian Society.

The most important piece of legislation that allowed the workers' gradual emergence into football, however, was the Factory Reform Act of 1850. This legislation sought to shorten the workweek to six days and institute half day Saturdays. By the 1870s, half day Saturdays were implemented in most factories. The creation of a half-day Saturday gave rise to an opportunity for workers to pursue leisure activities, most notably football. As football clubs became more popular with the working class, extensive football leagues were formed, and teams had to travel to play away games. This meant that workers had to take time away from work to play. They, however, could not afford to take time off work as the aristocrats could. To rectify this problem, they were given 'broken time' payments. This method of compensation to the workers was the first step towards professionalization.

Football's popularity amongst the workers also provided an opportunity for football club owners to profit, as many members of the working class were willing to pay to be spectators. In the midlands, an area that rose to prosperity during the industrial revolution, it was not uncommon to have ten thousand people pay to watch an "ordinary club match"¹⁵. Since there was money to be made in football, clubs started recruiting players from outside their own districts to play in their team meaning football was slowly becoming a full time occupation. As the popularity of football rose with the working class, the vehicle to the professionalization of football was being driven forward.

One club that rose from the consequences of the Industrial Revolution was West Ham United, then known as the Thames Ironworks Football Club. As their original name

¹⁵ Montague Shearman, *Athletics and Football*, (London: Longmans, 1888), 364.

suggests, they came from an industrial background. The club was created by industrialist Arnold F. Hills, who inherited the Thames Ironworks from his father. The football club was founded in 1895 following a strike. This cause was apparent as Hills wrote in the *Thames Ironworks Gazette* that he started the club to show “the importance of cooperation between workers and management” and that he was “anxious to wipe away the bitterness left by a recent strike”¹⁶. Founding the club was beneficial for Hills as it was a way to tie workers to their work place and develop a sense of loyalty, which could prevent industrial action. Also common amongst members of the elite, Hills’ founding of the club was in part due to his interest in social welfare and wanting to improve the neighborhood of his workers. Indeed, West Ham was a highly industrialized area in the East End of London and “developed into an important manufacturing centre and much of the growth of this area was directly connected with the inability of London to contain it”¹⁷. After the migration of factories to the East End, West Ham “became the principal home of London's offensive trades and a large proportion of its factories were of a kind that produced dirt, fumes, and obnoxious waste and were exceptionally destructive of the amenity of their surroundings.”¹⁸ Lack of space was also an issue in West Ham and in the late 19th century, there was an average of 6.46 persons per house compared to England and Wales’s 5.21¹⁹. This high population density led to the working class compounds that reformer Octavia Hill described. Hills himself stated that, “lack of recreational

¹⁶ Michael Korr, “West Ham United Football Club and the Beginnings of Professional Football in East London”, 1895-1914, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 13, No. 2, (Apr., 1978): 216.

¹⁷ 'Economic influences on growth: Employment opportunities', *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 5* (1966), pp. 9-21. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42702> Date accessed: 14 October 2009.

¹⁸ 'Economic influences on growth: Employment opportunities', *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 5* (1966), pp. 9-21. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42702> Date accessed: 14 October 2009.

¹⁹ Korr, “West Ham”, 218.

facilities was one of the worst deprivations in the lives of the residents of West Ham²⁰”.

Thus, we can see why the creation of a football club in West Ham was very important, as working class men needed a place to spend their leisure time and stay healthy.

Elites' View on Professional Football

The workers' gradual taking over of football was symbolically acknowledged in their victory in the 1883 Association Cup Final where the Blackburn Olympians triumphed over the Old Etonians. Following their defeat in this match, as well as the worker's overall dominance on the field, it was not surprising that the elites felt bitterness towards the working class taking over 'their' game. In particular, they were unhappy about the professionalization of the game that the working class launched, which became legitimized in 1885.

One frequent complaint that elite's made against professional football was its win at all cost mentality. *The Field*, a prominent English magazine on outdoor sports, illuminated this view:

at football the paid man is simply one who is called upon to give as good a display of his powers as he can, in order that the club which engages him may make its matches as attractive as possible, and so draw together large attendances. When he can't do this, he is replaced by others, hence the concentration on winning by fair means or foul²¹.

Since a player's livelihood was determined by their performance on the pitch, elites felt professionals would often engage in deliberate fouling. Obviously, this contradicts the gentlemanly ideal of self-restraint. Moreover, elites also suspected clubs of bribing

²⁰ Thames Ironworks Gazette (1895). cited in Korr, "West Ham", 216

²¹ *The Field*, 27 June, 1891. cited in Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society 1863-1915*, (New Jersey: Harvester Press, 1980), 73.

players and officials as their gate revenue largely depended on the results of the team. Elites seemed also to envy the working class players who displaced them as the stars of the game in a space of less than twenty years. This jealousy was evident when one prominent schoolmaster complained: “amateur players are practically excluded from the legitimate ambition of representing their own town, county or country”²².

The workers’ lack of education and class made their encroachment and professionalization of football even more appalling to the elites. Ernest Ensor, an English international cricketer active in the late 19th century who was educated in Dublin University, expanded on this problem in his article *The Football Madness*. Ensor complained that, through professionalization, workers took away the sportsmanship of the game as professionalization incites partisanship to a high degree. Thus, supporters took sides and refused to appreciate the skillfulness of their opponents. He also felt that partisanship often led to violence. Ensor’s patronizing of the working class continues as he lamented, “Foulest curses of an artisan’s vocabulary are shouted- and the British workman does not swear like a comfit-maker’s wife; murder and sudden death seem to be abound”²³. He further criticized the working class for their lack of education as he wrote that the class who supports professional football took whatever they read at face value (giving rise to tasteless tabloids) and suggests that the people who wrote for such publications were also of a similar background as well, thus their writing style was “atrocious”. These kinds of abuse were, of course, not only seen in the game of football

²² H.H. Almond, “*Football as a Moral Agent*” *The Nineteenth Century* XXXIV (1893): 907, Reproduced at Google Books, <http://books.google.com/>

²³ Ernest Ensor, “*The Football Madness*”. *Contemporary Review*. (Nov. 1898): 758.

but also in general societal attitudes treating the working class as uneducated and unsophisticated.

Punch, a British humor and satire magazine, was another good source of white-collar attitude in England towards professional football²⁴. One overarching theme we see in *Punch* is that football was a very dangerous sport and they even went as far as saying (rather humorously), “the candidate for the Victoria Cross- a football referee”²⁵. The Victoria Cross is the highest military decoration one can receive and to suggest that a referee could potentially win it for his work on the football field, even though sarcastically, shows the way the upper stratum of society looked down on football as a working class sport. This was also reflected in an illustration in *Punch* named *Nemesis* [Fig. 1]²⁶. This illustration showed two men of working class origin walking back from a football match carrying a bag. When asked what was in the bag, they replied “the umpire”. Here we see again that the elites felt the working class was turning football into a violent spectacle rather than a sportsmanly show. In addition, there is an illustration titled *Football Fever. Saturday Afternoon in the Midlands* [Fig. 2]²⁷, which encapsulates all these views of professional football. This illustration depicts a large crowd of working class men playing football with a sign saying ‘hospital for football accidents’ as well as the professional football headquarters leading into a jail. Such a depiction of football further strengthens the view that football was turning into a

²⁴ It is important to note that certain segments of the middle class played rugby over football, which will be discussed later in this paper. Nevertheless, their opinions does reflect the sentiments that the upper stratum of English society felt towards working class encroachment in upper-class sports.

²⁵ *Punch Magazine*, December 11, 1897, London: Punch publications (1897): 265. Reproduced at Internet Archive, <http://www.archive.org/index.php>. All citations hereafter with the title *Punch* have been accessed through this site.

²⁶ *Punch Magazine*, (November 23, 1889): 246 [Fig 1]

²⁷ *Punch Magazine*, (September 19, 1892): 239[Fig 2]

thuggish immoral sport. From the themes shown in *Punch*, it can be inferred that much of the upper class English society looked down on football because it was dominated by uneducated people. In fact, between 1887 and 1897, there were one hundred and twenty two mentions of football in *Punch*, almost all of which were derogatory.

[Fig. 1] *Nemesis* URL:

<http://www.archive.org/stream/punchvol96a97lemouoft#page/246/mode/1up>.

[Fig. 2] *Football Fever* URL:

<http://www.archive.org/stream/punchvol102a103lemouoft#page/239/mode/1up>.

The elites were also concerned about the amount of alcoholism and gambling that professionalization was perceived to have brought to football. Guy Thorne, a British journalist, once wrote, “Decent people no longer care to attend football matches. A new class of spectators has been created, men who care little or nothing for the sport itself, but who use a match as a mere opportunity and an excuse for drinking”²⁸. The increase of gambling that the elites’ thought the working class initiated was also seen in a *Punch* article, which expressed a desire for, “an elimination of professionalism and a restoration of that game as a mere past time to be played. And not be gambled on by purchasers of halfpenny papers”²⁹. These ‘purchasers of halfpenny papers’ was obviously another veiled attack on the working class for corrupting the elites’ noble game.

There were those in society, however, who were not a member of the working class yet still supported professional football. One such person was Sir Montague Shearman who, through his book *Athletics and Football* (published 1887), expressed the

²⁸ C.B.Fry’s Magazine, vol. V, no. 27, June 1906 pp. 196-8. cited in Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*, (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 177.

²⁹ *Punch Magazine*, (December 25, 1897): 300

merits of professionalization. Shearman was a judge who was educated at Oxford and was a distinguished sportsman. He was also the vice president of the AAA (Amateur Athletic Association).

Shearman felt that in some respects, professional football was actually beneficial to society as a whole. Instead of being a sport that was dominated by the working class, he described professional football as something that helped bind everyone in English society together as its popularity transcends class. He also explained that much of the gate money that was gained by clubs often got donated to charitable organizations, which goes against the greedy image of football clubs that some elites claimed them to be.

In addition, Shearman argued that football, by the 1880s, was only amateur in name. Many players were already being paid under the table for their services. Instead of professionals masquerading as ‘gentlemen’, Shearman would rather have players honestly saying they played for a living. He also asserted that having official provisions for paying players was actually a lot more moral for the game as it forced clubs to officially register the players they were paying salary to. This regulation allowed for the enforcement of the rule, which stated that players could only play for clubs within sixty miles of where they were born or have lived for at least two years. With this law, the game would be a far cry from the pre-regulated days when clubs in London would have teams consisting only of Scottish mercenaries.

The notion of professional football being especially dangerous compared to its amateur form was also challenged by Shearman, as he explained that a bit of “rough and tumble” was a part of every Englishmen’s nature and was good for the body.

Furthermore, football has had very few fatalities and surely “fewer than those who have fallen in the hunting field, are the victims of football. If the outcry against football because of its danger could be justified, not a single outdoor sport could survive”³⁰. This defense of the safety of football showed that professionalization had not caused teams to take on a ‘win at all cost’ mentality and thus did not corrupt the game as a large segment of the elites suggested.

Shearman’s overall defense of professional football seems more objective and rational when juxtaposed with Ensor’s criticisms or the arguments found in *The Field*. Rather than basing his arguments on principles and ideals, Shearman appears to have actually examined how the changes have affected the game.

Elites’ and Workers’ Relationship in Larger society

This conflict and power struggle between the elites against the working class did not only play out in the ‘ownership’ of football but also in larger society. In the political realm, this discontent caused immense tension between the Liberal party, lead by William Gladstone, and the Conservative party lead by Benjamin Disraeli. William Gladstone was born to Sir John Gladstone, 1st Baronet, which meant he was of noble birth. Benjamin Disraeli, on the other hand, was born to a Jewish immigrant family and hence was of a lower class than Gladstone. In fact, Queen Victoria once described Disraeli as having “risen from the people”³¹. Disraeli was sympathetic towards the working class and fought for their rights while many members of the Liberal party believed in protecting the privileges of the middle and upper class. This difference in political inclination was

³⁰ Montague Shearman, *Athletics and Football* (London: Longmans, Green, 1888), 369.

³¹ Richard Aldous, *The Lion and the Unicorn: Gladstone vs Disraeli*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007), 188

evident when a working class representative said in the House of Commons, “his class had the greatest admiration for the Chancellor of the Exchequer [Disraeli], as one who had always advocated the right of labor, and though the ‘other side’ pretended to be liberal, it was in fact illiberal”³². More specifically, Disraeli and his supporters were fighting to give suffrage to a large amount of the working class. Previously, this right was only reserved for the elites and was a marker of class superiority over the masses.

This push for greater suffrage became actualized in the 1867 Reform Act. This legislation gave the vote to any male who owned a house in a constituency borough or were paying £10 to rent a room. It also gave more seats in the House of Commons to influential cities that rose during the Industrial Revolution such as Liverpool and Manchester. Disraeli felt incorporating the working class to play a bigger role in society would be beneficial for the nation instead of reserving power to a select group. We see this view in his speech on the Reform Bill as he said, “you would have a better chance of touching the popular heart, of evoking the national sentiment by embracing the great body of those men who occupy houses and fulfill the duties of citizenship by the payment of rates, than by the more limited and, in our opinion, more dangerous proposals”³³. The act weakened the dominance of the landed aristocracy in politics, as they could no longer keep power by bribing a small amount of influential men. Instead, they had to appeal to the masses with their policies, which significantly changed the nature of English politics.

³² *The Times*, “The Premier and Mr. Disraeli Upon the Reform Bill,” May 01, 1867

³³ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 187 (15 July 1867): 1599-1614. Reproduced at Hansard, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/>

Similar to elite resentment towards the professionalization of football, the new reform caused the elites to feel their power and prestige diminishing. Those who were against the bill, such as Lord Salisbury, said: “The principle of this bill was the principle of numbers as against wealth and intellect”³⁴. This quote suggests that the traditional elites who were against the reform thought the working class were unfit to make electoral decisions for they were uneducated. This criticism is similar to Ensor’s critique of professional football because it gave rise to an inarticulate tabloid press as both elites criticized the masses’ intelligence.

From the class debates that surrounded this influential reform act, we can draw certain parallels with the discussions that surrounded the professionalization of football. In both cases, the working class was becoming increasingly influential, which meant infringing on what the middle class and aristocratic elites’ perceived was their rights. Since the working class taking over of football did not begin until around 1875, I believe the fervent opposition to professionalization by some of the elites was almost a last gasp attempt in trying to hold onto something, which was supposed to be their domain. In fact, we see in parliamentary records that the disdain for professional football had been mentioned in the House of Commons. Mr. William Coddington, a Member of Parliament from Blackburn, bemoaned that “due to the fact that football has become much more a professional game than it was a few years ago. It is a great misfortune for the town in

³⁴ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 187 (15 July 1867): 1599-1614.

which I live and for all the other towns which try to emulate each other in this noble game”³⁵.

Football as an Opiate of the Masses

The elites’ original opposition against professional football actually seemed shortsighted as it actually gave them advantages beyond the game itself. Professional football was able to help create a more harmonious society through lowering working class alcoholism. This effect was contrary to some elite’s view that professional football would cause an increase in drinking. Sir William Marriot, Member of Parliament for Brighton, explained this benefit of professional football:

Suppose a man lives in one room with a family of four or five children. The place cannot possibly be always kept clean and comfortable. When he comes home from work in the evening he wants the same thing that people in our position want—he wants recreation, and if he cannot find that in his own home he will seek for it in the glaring gin palaces and public-house where every comfort is provided, and where he can go in and get drink and find amusement. But now on Saturday afternoons thousands and tens of thousands may be found either engaged in or on-looking at a game of football³⁶.

Since professional football allowed clubs to be run officially as a business, many clubs became wealthier. A consequence of this new found wealth was that clubs started investing in larger stadiums to take in larger crowds, thus earn even more gates receipts. As stadiums expanded, more and more men were drawn away from public houses and into football stadiums. An example of such a club was the Tottenham Hotspurs, who, in

³⁵ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 354 (18 June 1891): 803-77

³⁶ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 10, (15 March 1893): 93-155.

1899, opened their new stadium, which had the capacity of 35,000 people. Previously, their ground at Northumberland Park only held half that amount³⁷.

Sir Austen Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, also noticed this beneficial effect of professional football. In his budget speech given during 1905, he declared that the revenue from the brewing industry had been on a sharp decline in the last fifteen years. He attributed this drop to the changing habits of people, namely the increase in time spent watching football. His appreciation for professional football can be seen as he said, "I am inclined to believe that the progress of temperance owes more to the operation of these causes [professional football] than to any measures, however desirable in themselves, which this House has seen fit to take"³⁸. From Chamberlain's speech, it is evident that the increase of working class men attending professional football games has had a largely positive affect on society. In fact, we learn in a House of Commons discussion on *The Decline of Beet and Spirits Consumption* that "consumption per head both of spirits and of beer was less in 1904 than in any one of the last fifteen years, and that since 1900 the decline has been continuous. The consumption of spirits per head of the population in 1900 was 1.09 gallons, and by 1904, it had sunk to .95 of a gallon. The consumption of beer, which in 1900 was 31½gallons per head of the population, had decreased last year to 29 gallons"³⁹. Far from being a change that harmed the elites, professionalization seemed to have created a safer society with less alcoholism. This was especially beneficial for the business/ industrial middle class, many of whom employed a

³⁷ *Tottenham and Edomonton Weekly Herald*, "A Romance of Football: The history of the Tottenham Hotspur F.C.," February 1921

³⁸ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 144, (10 April 1905): 1051.

³⁹ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 144 (10 April 1905): 1050.

large number of workers. As working men spent less time being intoxicated, a firm's overall productivity would obviously increase.

Professional football was able to have this wholesome affect on the working class because it gave them an escape from their monotonous lives. Even with the creation of the half-day Saturday, laborers still worked immensely long hours and an average workday (excluding Saturday), was from 6 am to 5:30 pm, eleven and a half hours in total⁴⁰. Unsurprisingly, many workers wanted to drink themselves into a happy oblivion to make up for their repetitive and exhausting work life. Supporting a football team, however, provided an extra outlet for them to escape as they could take pride in their regional football team as well as take part in 'village' festivities such as singing team songs and wearing team colors. These activities allowed them to release their pent up emotions and stress, which were built up in the highly regulated realm of work.

In many cases, the notion of professional football turning the sport into a violent spectacle between opposing fans was also untrue. Describing a journey to a match between Luton and Millwall, *Pastime* magazine wrote, "Though they [the working class] were all very excited they conducted themselves with as much decorum as they had been millionaires, except that they showed impatience over the slowness of the train"⁴¹. Even in moments of spontaneity when the crowd invaded the pitch, they would quickly return to the stands with the referee's orders⁴². Evidence of good crowd behavior can also be found in parliamentary records, as a Member of Parliament once noted, four policemen

⁴⁰ Glasgow Digital Library, "Work: The Springburn Experience 1840-1988," Glasgow Digital Library, <http://gdl.cdli.strath.ac.uk/springburn/springwor/springworcon.htm> (accessed December 5, 2009).

⁴¹ *Pastime*, 2 October 1895, cited in Mason "Association", 159.

⁴² *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 26 April, 1915, cited in Mason "Association", 161.

who followed a group of supporters after a football match reported that “their conduct was good, and that no obscene language, or language of any kind”⁴³. These evidences of well-behaved crowds differ greatly to a *Punch* article, which wrote, “Two men have been fined at Atherstone for assaulting a football referee. This decision that the act was an illegal one has come as a nasty surprise to football spectators all over the country, and is considered an unwarrantable interference with an old-established sport”⁴⁴. Despite *Punch* suggesting that the working class and crowd violence was inextricably linked, we have seen that evidence points to the contrary.

Interestingly, it was professionalization, which helped pacify crowd behavior in football⁴⁵. The formation of professional football leagues meant that more regulations were in place aiding the control of crowds. Furthermore, since many clubs’ stadiums were expanding, which costs a fair amount of money; it was in the interest of the clubs to put in measures to ensure their supporters were peaceful. Such measures include segregation of crowds, especially between opposing supporters, since most of the hostilities involved interclub rivalry. An article from the *Athletic News* written in 1899 summed up the view on football crowd behavior back in the beginning of professionalization: “it is striking proof of the peacefulness of football crowds that, as a rule, [only] half a dozen flat-footed robertos serve to keep both the members and the ticket-holders and the casual sixpenny gentlemen well in order”⁴⁶. This quote showed that

⁴³ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 156, (01 May 1906): 390.

⁴⁴ *Punch Magazine*, January 22, 1908, 61.

⁴⁵ John Hutchinson, ‘Some Aspects of Football Crowds Before 1914’ *The Working Class and Leisure* (1975).

⁴⁶ *Athletic News*, 17 April 1899. cited in Mason “Association”, 167.

in football games, only six police officers were needed to keep crowds of over ten thousand in order, a testament to the fans' good behavior.

There were, of course, instances in which crowd behavior did get out of hand. One example of this took place in a game between Preston North End and West Bromwich Albion, a match that Preston won one goal to nil. A match report in the periodical *The Graphic* reported that the supporters of the losing team "broke in upon the field of play on the account of not being entertained"⁴⁷. This type of behavior is similar to the kind of hooliganism that football is so famous for today. Looking at historian Wray Vamplew's data, however, we see that in from 1900 to 1912, there was only four clubs in total that were closed and only two clubs received cautions for bad crowd behavior⁴⁸. From these findings, we can infer that this type of behavior was often an aberration amongst a usually well-mannered crowd.

Professional football also became an important tool for elites to control working class political power. The political importance of football is seen in a *Punch* article titled, *Lord Chesterfield's Post-Cards to his Son*. This title is a play on *Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son*, often seen as the quintessential guide to being a gentleman in the 18th century. The article described how a group of "his [Lord Chesterfield's] constituents lived upon him for two years simply by founding Football Association"⁴⁹. Although this was a piece of satire, it did show that cultivating football was an important part of

⁴⁷ *The Graphic Saturday*, March 23, 1889.

⁴⁸ Patrick Murphy, John Williams and Eric Dunning, *Football on Trial: Spectator Violence and Development in the Football World* (London: Routledge, 1990), 41.

⁴⁹ *Punch Magazine*, June 29, 1895.

keeping political popularity, especially since so many members of the working class were given suffrage with the 1867 Reform Act.

Professional football was able to bring political benefits to the elites because it distracted workers from their economic plight. In an article, titled *Is Football Anti-Social* from the *Labor Leader* journal, the socialists lamented that professional football was merely a show for the working class and did not provide any physical or social benefit for them. The article further complained that the workers' obsession with football rendered "them mentally incapable of understanding their own needs and rights"⁵⁰. The author then argued, "we are in danger of producing a race of workers who can only obey their masters and think football. This is the material out of which slaves are made; the material which gives us shouting Jingoese, ignorant electors, and craven blacklegs"⁵¹. Since watching football matches gave workers a temporary escape from their own harsh reality, they are less likely to become class conscious and realize they were being marginalized. Furthermore, an article in the *Fabian Tracts*, pointed out that when an uneducated voter is made to select ten names out of a list of thirty or more, "number of persons would be returned to parliament not to represent a definite political policy or a particular view held by a small section, but because they had a son who played in the borough football clubs"⁵². This criticism showed again that football was a tool for politicians to gain votes and workers cared more about football than policies that would help them. These critiques from socialist organizations further confirms the usefulness of professional

⁵⁰ *Labor Leader* 19 Match, 2 April 1904 cited in Mason "Association", 237.

⁵¹ *Labor Leader* 19 Match, 2 April 1904 cited in Mason "Association", 237.

⁵² Henry H Schloesser, "Proportional Representation" *Fabian Tract No. 153* (1911): 12.

football for the elites since even the group that most vehemently fights for workers rights acknowledge football as being detrimental to their cause.

Movement Towards 'Society's Game'

During the fin-de-siècle period, both football and greater English society experienced a melding of classes. Themes of this change taking place in English society can be seen in E.M Forster's novel *Howards End*. In the novel, Howards End is an old English countryside estate built for aristocrats. This estate, however, was inherited by several different classes. This included the middle class business elites Henry Wilcox, Margret Schlegel and Helen Schlegel as well as Helen's child, whose father was from a lower class background. Howards End is often considered a symbol of England, thus, showed that English society around this time exhibited a greater cooperation amongst different classes.

In the world of football, we see such a development by looking at the life of Sir Arthur Kinnaird, captain of the Old Etonian side, which lost against the Blackburn Olympic in that historic match in 1883. Arthur Kinnaird was someone who was in the heart of the conflict between the working class and upper class over the 'ownership' of the game of football. He was of aristocratic origins since he was born to the Baron Kinnaird of Rossie. He also went to school in Eton before going onto Trinity College in Cambridge. Moreover, Kinnaird was an avid sportsman who competed in running, swimming cricket, tennis and last but not least football. During football's amateur period, he was a legendary player competing in eleven FA cup finals, a record, that still stands today. He was also a member of the Football Association Committee, which was originally against the professionalization of the game. In 1883, after playing in the

historic FA cup final against the working class Blackburn Olympic, he realized that the forces of professionalization could not be stopped. Thus, he started lobbying for the professionalization of football ‘under stringent conditions’ to the FA. His shifting attitude reflects the greater class cooperation seen in English society.

Many of the elites, much like Kinnaird, actually reentered professional football, albeit in an administrative position⁵³. This greater participation of elites is apparent in a *Punch* article titled *Football, Limited*, which described a fictional Lord Chief Justice Bentley who, much like Kinnaird, was “probably the finest centre half who has ever played for England. Being now Lord Chief Justice, it is he who grants to clubs the necessary affiliation orders”⁵⁴. Moreover, the business middle class became a large part of English football as the most common industry from which directors of football clubs were drawn from was wholesale and retail industry⁵⁵.

I believe the elites eventually got involved with professional football because the obvious societal and political benefits to them became apparent. Professional football helped lower working class drunkenness, thus made for a safer society. It also mitigated class tensions between the working class and the elites, as football allowed working men to escape their realities. Last but not least, it was actually a tool for elites to gain and maintain power in the political realm.

In addition, the elites also most likely realized that many of Shearman’s description on the state of ‘amateur’ football rang true. Before official

⁵³ Mason, “*Assocaition*”, 44.

⁵⁴ *Punch Magazine*, December 23, 1908, 466.

⁵⁵ Mason, “*Assocaition*”, 44.

professionalization, football was already rather corrupt and the chances of moving it back to its original form were low. Under the ‘amateur’ system, players were not tied down by contracts to clubs and hence could offer their services to the highest bidder, effectively turning themselves into mercenaries. With proper regulations, paid players would be forced to be contracted to their clubs leading to some degree of loyalty. In addition, as Shearman said, players were only allowed to be contracted to clubs within sixty miles of where they were born or have lived for at least two years. It is also safe to assume that these types of controls on professional football was what Kinnaird meant by professionalization under “stringent regulations”. Ironically, professionalization with these restrictions allowed elites to keep integrity in the game. This was much different to how elites such as Ensor felt would happen to their noble game with professionalization.

Rugby: The Middle Class Game

While football was going through the struggle between amateurism and professionalization, rugby also faced a similar challenge. Unlike football, however, the elites of rugby held firm to their amateur ethos. These tensions ultimately lead to a split of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) into two separate branches, a professional branch, also known as the Northern Union (NU), and an amateur one, which retained the name RFU. By looking at the origins of rugby football and the class that the game belonged to, we can see why this schism took place as well as why it did not happen in football.

Rugby, much like football, emerged from the ‘muscular Christianity movement’. Football was developed in the fields of Eton and Harrow, the most upper class schools in England. Naturally, it was the game for the elites of English society. Meanwhile, rugby was developed in the fields of Rugby, a public school in the West Midlands of England

that was attended mainly by the newly rich middle class. Other pre-dominantly middle class public schools such as Tonbridge and Oundle also picked rugby as their main sport.

Many of the middle class picked rugby because they saw it as a vehicle to help them enter the elite sphere⁵⁶. Rugby was able to serve this purpose as it actually reflected elite values more so than football did despite being created in a middle class institution. The traditional values that the elites celebrated were “toughness of muscle and toughness of heart”⁵⁷. They saw it as important that their children internalized these principles because they were “vital ingredients for the rising generation of national leaders and imperial rulers”⁵⁸. These values, however, were much more evident in rugby. The importance of toughness in this sport was apparent in many public school old boys’ view on the pass being used in the game. While passing was an integral part of football, it was seen as a vermin inside of the rugby game. Shearman, a public school old boy, reflects this sentiment when he lamented that the notion of passing would cause rugby to “degenerate from the manly sport into the elegant art of catch-ball”⁵⁹. Rugby practitioners disregarded passing because it allowed players to move the ball to prevent themselves from being tackled hence it was unmanly. This ‘toughness of muscle and toughness of heart’ also included maintaining a sense of fairness and chivalry on the battlefield. These ideals, however, was far better cultivated by rugby since it was much more physical in nature, as Shearman further explained, “to our mind the delight of the Rugby Union

⁵⁶ other than the industrial/ business middle class as well as the members of the middle class who held enough standing in society to enter the elite institutions, which will be discussed later in the essay

⁵⁷ Timothy J.L. Chandler and John Nauright, “Rugby, Manhood and Identity,” in *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, ed. John Nauright and Timothy J.L Chandler (London: F. Cass, 1996), 7.

⁵⁸ Timothy J.L. Chandler and John Nauright, “Rugby, Manhood and Identity,” 7.

⁵⁹ Shearman, “*Football*,” 318.

game- a delight which was not given to the same extent by Association play [football]- came from its resemblance to mimic warfare”⁶⁰. It was through requiring players to stick to the rules and “play fairly in the thick and heat of a struggle”, which transmitted these elite values to the players⁶¹. It is not surprising that the newly rich middle class (those who could not send their children to elite public schools) wanted their children to mimic elite values and desired to push them officially into the elite category as future leaders of England.

Rugby and Football: Differing Attitudes

In 1895, ten years after the elites and working class reconciled their differences on football, the rugby union split into a professional and an amateur branch as previously mentioned. It was rugby clubs in the Industrial North such as Yorkshire, which first started paying their players as many of the participants were working class. The RFU were obviously unhappy with this development and suspended many players suspected of receiving payment. By 1893, many Northern clubs were angry at the RFU’s strict adherence to amateur rugby and representatives from Yorkshire petitioned for “players to be allowed compensation for bona fide loss of time”⁶². The RFU, however, overwhelmingly rejected this request as it was “contrary to the true interest of the game and its spirit” and further announced, “only clubs composed entirely of amateurs shall be eligible for membership in the RFU”⁶³. Physician Arthur Budd, the president of the RFU

⁶⁰ Shearman, “*Football*,” 309.

⁶¹ William J. Baker, “*Origins of Rugby Football: The Life and Death of a Victorian Myth*,” *Albion*, Vol. 13, no. 2 (1981): 122.

⁶² Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentleman and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football* (New York: New York University Press, 1979), 136.

⁶³ William J. Baker, “*Making of a Working Class Football Culture in Victorian England*,” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1979): 245

and a Cliftonian old boy (a public school in Bristol), complained, “the great game of football [rugby] was never invented by the schoolboy to provide a livelihood for professionals and exclude amateurs, or to become a medium of speculation for gate-money financiers”⁶⁴. He further added, if professionalization was legitimized like football, it would become “a catalogue of corruptibility and decay”⁶⁵. Obviously, Budd had not considered the beneficial effect that professional football brought to society and the ability of the F.A to regulate professionalization after the move was made official. Professional football was certainly not a “catalogue of corruptibility and decay”. Following this impasse, Northern rugby clubs decided to form their own Northern Rugby Football Union, which did not hold any provisions against professionals.

To understand why rugby and football took such divergent paths, we must explore the two sports’ respective leader’s reactions to the first wave of working class participation (before the debates on professionalization). While the football elites and rugby leaders were both frustrated by working class encroachment into ‘their game’, the resentment was to differing degrees. Football elites were not so much angry about working class participation but were aggrieved about the masses dominating their game. Meanwhile, rugby leaders were against working class participation of any sort. This divergent opinion was apparent in the two different party’s view on cup-ties. While football had frequently pitted the elites against working class teams through cup-ties, such as the F.A cup (in fact, elites encouraged working class participation in this cup), rugby leaders abhorred the idea of a cup-tie. Shearman explained that the competitive

⁶⁴ Dunning and Sheard, “*Barbarians*,” 136.

⁶⁵ Dunning and Sheard, “*Barbarians*,” 136.

nature of a rugby cup-tie, especially with working class teams, excites “partisanship to a high degree and lead to great expense and trouble”⁶⁶. Clearly, a high degree of partisanship does not confer with the amateur ethos of basing appreciation on fine play rather than team loyalty. Moreover, Shearman felt that cup-ties gave rise to “unnecessary roughness”⁶⁷. This unnecessary roughness was due to the working class having a win at all cost mentality, which was antithetical to the gentlemanly ideal of keeping fairness and sticking to the rules amidst the physical nature of rugby. Shearman even went as far as stating that he has “seen various Rugby Union cup ties, and never left such a match without feeling strongly that they are an abomination”⁶⁸. While these criticisms are ostensibly similar to elite’s view on professional football, it is important to remember the rugby elites were only discussing cup-ties.

The main cause for this differing degree of irritation to working class encroachment is down to the relative societal position of rugby and football practitioners. The members of the middle class who picked rugby were usually those who did not attend the elite public schools. As such, they were relative new comers to the upper stratum of society meaning they were less confident about their position, as historian Eric Dunning argues, “status insecurity is typical of *arrivites*”⁶⁹. This could explain why rugby leaders had such an adverse reaction to working class participation. The elites, meanwhile, were more confident in their societal position thus were willing to play against the masses.

⁶⁶ Shearman, “*Football*,” 330.

⁶⁷ Shearman, “*Football*,” 330.

⁶⁸ Shearman, “*Football*,” 330

⁶⁹ Dunning and Shaerd, “*Barbarians*,” 165

Given that Shearman was so against working class participation in rugby, it may seem illogical that he was previously quoted in this essay for supporting professional football. These contradicting views can be explained by Shearman's class background. While he attended a public school, the institution that he attended, Merchant Taylors College, was not considered prestigious like Eton or Harrow. Moreover, Shearman was a rugby player rather than a footballer in his public school days. Therefore, he was much more emotionally invested in rugby and it held much more significance to his class than football did. This background could contribute to his unbending feelings about the sacredness of rugby played with an amateur ethos. Conversely, he would not care too deeply about what happened to football values, thus was able to look rationally at professional football's benefits to society.

This relative difference in status anxiety between the middle class, who did not attend the top public schools, and the elites also helps explain why the split within the RFU took place but did not in the F.A. Much like the general class that initially took to rugby, leaders of the RFU were drawn from newer public schools⁷⁰. Moreover, no leaders of the RFU held royal titles⁷¹. Despite these middle class public school old boys' best protests, as seen in the debates over cup-ties, the working class north was able to gain a firm hold in the rugby world. This led to a push for professionalization. As relative newcomers to upper class English society, they saw the ever-increasing strength of the masses in rugby as a threat to their place in society. This fear blinded them from rationally looking at the costs and benefits of professionalization. In addition, many of

⁷⁰ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 161.

⁷¹ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 161.

the RFU 'ruling class' were professionals such as physician or lawyers⁷². As such, they were not reliant on the working class for their livelihoods thus felt a lesser need to cultivate peaceful class relations.

The most powerful members of the F.A, on the other hand, were drawn largely from men who attended the elite public schools such as Eton or Harrow⁷³. Many of these elites also held royal titles⁷⁴. As previously discussed, the football elites, much like the rugby leaders, felt resentment towards the working class' original encroachment into their game. They, however, realized that professionalization allowed them to 'opiate the masses' and in a sense 'control' working class political power. The reason why the elites reached this rational view on the benefits of football was once again down to them being further away from the masses on the class spectrum and thus was more confident about their position in society. This position allowed them to see that allowing professional football would create a more harmonious society and thus preserve their power both in the game as well as in society. Another major segment of the F.A was made up of the industrial middle class such as factory owners⁷⁵. As such, they were reliant on the working class for their profit. From the beginning of football, the industrial middle class advocated working class participation, as evident by Arnold Hill's creation of West Ham United.

That is not to say, however, that no professionals participated in the administration of football. Indeed, one of the most common professions inside of the F.A

⁷² Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 161.

⁷³ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 161.

⁷⁴ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 161.

⁷⁵ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 161.

council was journalists. Two factors could explain why these professionals did not alter the F.A's decision. Firstly, not all professionals were educated in lesser schools such as Rugby or Oundle. There were those who were educated at the elite public schools. These people would have socialized amongst the elites and just the fact of gaining entry into such schools would imply a certain societal standing. Therefore, they would have been more confident in their status. One example would be C. W Alcock, who was a journalist by trade and an old Harrowian. He also served as the F.A secretary. During the debates on professionalization, he claimed that, "professionals are a necessity to the growth of the game and I object to the idea that they are the utter outcasts some people represent them to be"⁷⁶. Secondly, those with an elite background would have overpowered the other middle class professionals who may have opposed the F.A's resolution. Dunning illuminates this power structure of the F.A when he explained that, "the number of Etonian, Harroivian and aristocratic football administrators are only small but it is likely, nevertheless, that their general influence over the Association game was, by virtue of their social status, greater than their numbers alone would lead one to suspect"⁷⁷.

Middle Class Reactions Following the Rugby Split

The middle class rugby player's status insecurity became even more apparent following the split. This insecurity was apparent in the Old Rugbeian Society's publishing of the book *The Origin of Rugby Football* in 1897. The purpose of this book was to reaffirm the legend of how rugby was invented. This was the story of William Webb Ellis, a student at Rugby School, who "with a fine disregard for the rules of football, as played in his time, first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus

⁷⁶ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 160.

⁷⁷ Dunning and Shaerd, "Barbarians," 160

originating the distinctive feature of the rugby game”⁷⁸. The Rugby old boys were compelled to reaffirm this story because there were writers in the late nineteenth century who were claiming that rugby was actually developed out of folk football⁷⁹. Since folk football was ultra violent and held a working class connotation, this would seem to legitimize the working class and the NU as the true leaders of rugby football. By publishing this book, the middle class players were able to firmly place rugby in the middle class domain and as ‘their’ invention, thus ostensibly making them the real leaders of the sport. In fact, this story was immortalized in 1900 when Rugby School erected a plaque with Ellis’ Story on it [Fig. 3]⁸⁰. It is important to note that numerous historians have since dispelled this story. The middle class’ belief in a story that was so fantastical further substantiates that they were blinded by their fear of the working class taking over their position of power. Anyone who was looking at this matter objectively at the time would realize that it was “just not sociologically plausible that a deeply-entrenched traditional game could have been changed by a single act”⁸¹.

[Fig. 3] Rugby School Rugby Plaque URL: http://wesclark.com/rrr/wwe_marker.jpg.

⁷⁸ Baker, “*Origins of Rugby Football*,” 118

⁷⁹ Rugbeian Old Boys Society, *Origin of Rugby Football* (Warwick: A.J. Lawrence, 1897), 3.

⁸⁰ Wes Brown, “William Webb Ellis Marker,” *The Rugby Readers Review*, http://wesclark.com/rrr/wwe_marker.jpg (accessed March 30, 2011).

⁸¹ Baker, “*Origins of Rugby Football*,” 130.

Consequences of the Split

After the split between the RFU and the NU, rugby became increasingly segregated between the middle class and the working class. The RFU declared, “any contact with an NU club or player on the football field was an act of professionalism, punishable by a life ban from the Rugby Union”⁸². This rule was very strictly enforced. There was one incident where a player was banned from the RFU because a NU rugby team paid for his third-class train ticket to watch one of their games¹. Another example would be Goole Football Club. This team was banned from the RFU because they played a match against a touring pantomime troupe named the Little Red Riding Hood, who themselves had previously played in a charity match against an NU team⁸³. One RFU official even suggested, “anyone who watched a NU game, let alone played it, should be barred from taking part in rugby union”⁸⁴. While football was moving towards greater harmonization between the elites, business/ industrial middle class and the working class, rugby took other segments of the middle class and the working class further and further apart.

The severe castigation that the RFU imposed on professional players meant that the English national team, administered by the RFU, was left without many of the nation’s best players. This led to England being beaten by one of their colonies, New Zealand, 15-0. This loss, of course, dented English morale significantly, as the country that they owned and ran was able to defeat the English at their own game. As historian James W. Martens explains, “the loss of the English XV to the New Zealanders was, for

⁸² Collins, “Rugby’s Great Split,” 128.

⁸³ Collins, “Rugby’s Great Split,” 128.

⁸⁴ Collins, “Rugby’s Great Split,” 129.

those already worried over the nation's demise, not merely a game, but further evidence of England's plight. The Old style of the Victorian period was no longer able to keep pace with modern inventions"⁸⁵. That invention was the deployment of a wing back that obstructed opposing players, which allowed passes to be made easily⁸⁶. Ironically, the New Zealanders did not come up with this innovation themselves but learned it from a NU team from Yorkshire. Had the RFU not banned professional players from the national team, the English XV would surely have used this technique and the New Zealanders would not have humiliated the team. Therefore, by segregating the middle class and the working class, rugby also contributed to denting of national morale.

By dividing rugby along professional and amateur lines, rugby was not able to encompass the majority of society thus did not turn into the wide spread spectacle of football. Moreover, the damaging losses to English colonies further turned the public away from rugby. As historian James W. Martens wrote, "the schism had fatal consequences for the popularity of the game in England"⁸⁷. Unlike professional football, which was a game that unites, rugby became a game that divides.

Conclusion

On the surface, the notion of football being 'the people's' game seemed to be accurate. While it is true that the working class tended to dominate on the football field and many of the supporters were also of a similar background, we see that elites were also very involved in the running of the professional game. In ways, it served as a

⁸⁵ James W. Martens, "They Stooped to Conquer: Rugby Union Football, 1895-1914," *Journal of Sports History*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (1993): 33.

⁸⁶ Martens, "They Stooped to Conquer," 33.

⁸⁷ Martens, "They Stooped to Conquer," 15.

unifying force for society as all classes who participated in the game from the workers to the aristocrats were able to derive benefits from it. When juxtaposed with rugby, football's ability to unite is further magnified. The stubbornness of rugby leaders created class tensions and a weakened national team, which almost lead to the demise of the sport from English consciousness. The effects of this split are still apparent today as football plays a much more prominent role in English society when compared to rugby. Given the benefits that it gave to English society overall, football should really be known as society's game.

Chapter 2: Football and Sectarianism: The Celtic-Rangers Rivalry

Introduction

“We’re up to our knees and Fenian blood,” screamed a young lad clad in blue and orange¹. Another man dressed in green and white screamed back, “get stuck intae them Orange-Masonic bastards”². Such war cries are ones that you would expect to hear in Northern Ireland during the sixties and seventies. These Sectarian chants, however, were actually heard from the terraces of matches between the Glasgow Rangers and Celtic Football Club. This rivalry is famously known as ‘The Old Firm’. While these chants have been well documented since the 1920s, it has continued well into the present. ‘The Old Firm’ has and still holds a central role in Glaswegian society, as Journalist and former striker for Cambridge University Sandy Strang rather humorously observed, “The Glaswegian definition of an atheist: someone who goes to a Rangers-Celtic match to watch the football”³. Obviously, any ‘Old Firm’ match is much more than ‘just a football game’.

The Rangers and Celtic, two clubs from Glasgow, have had a virtual hegemony over Scottish football. Between them, the two clubs have won the Scottish Premier League title 95 times in the last century. More importantly, the Celtic-Rangers relationship is often considered one of the ugliest examples of a football rivalry. It is derided for its violent clashes as well as its sinister racial and religious undertones. This

¹ Michael R. Booker Jr, “Orange Alba: The Civil Religion of Loyalism in the Southwestern Lowlands of Scotland since 1798” (PhD Diss., University of Tennessee, 2010), 212.

² William J. Murray, *The Old Firm: Sectarianism, Sport and Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2000), 77

³ Burns Country, “A Toast to the Lassies,” Burns Country, <http://www.robertburns.org/toast.html> (accessed April 19, 2011)

malignant rivalry has been strong since the early 1900s and is to this day still referred to as “Scotland’s Secret Shame”⁴.

The reason for this intense rivalry is that Rangers is a symbol of Protestantism and Scotland, while Celtic is a bastion of Catholicism and Irishness. As George Blake, an author who has written extensively on shipbuilding in the Clydeside, wrote in 1937, “Blue for the Protestants of Scotland and Ulster, green for the Roman Catholics of the Free State; it is a bitter war waged on that strip of white-barred turf. All the social problems of a hybrid city were sublimated in the clash of mercenaries”⁵. Unsurprisingly, this rivalry both reflects and refracts onto Glaswegian society.

As infamous as this rivalry was and is, observers and the popular press may have overplayed the negatives of it. In this chapter, I will look at the Rangers-Celtic relationship from its beginnings up until the Second World War and show that this rivalry made many positive contributions to the city. The first part of this chapter will focus on the rivalry before the Great War, where we will find that ‘The Old Firm’ did not reflect the hate filled version we see today. During the inter-war period, the rivalry started picking up the sectarian elements that people commonly associate with ‘The Old Firm’. Despite this sectarian element, however, I will argue that it helped create a more harmonious society in the inter-war period.

⁴ Sam Poling, “Scotland’s Secret Shame,” BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/panorama/4284023.stm> (accessed November 15, 2010).

⁵ George Blake, *The Shipbuilders* (London, 1935), 86.

History of Sectarianism in Scotland

The antagonism between Scotsmen/Protestants and Irishmen/Catholics has a long historical precedent, beginning from the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century led by clergyman John Knox. Scotland officially broke from the Papacy in 1560. Sports historian William J. Murray claims that there are few countries in, which the reformation was as complete as it was in Scotland⁶. In fact, “every sign, sound and sight of popery was removed from the reformed creed”⁷. From the reformation, we see the beginning of constructing Protestantism as a Scottish identity. In 16th century, Scots were worried that the Catholic Mary of Guise, who became regent on behalf of her daughter Mary of Scots and had a close relationship with France, would allow Scotland to be ruled unofficially by France. This fear led them to turn to England for support. England, in turn, sent troops to Scotland to support the Protestants and ushered in a new era of Protestantism.

In 1637, however, Charles I, King of England, tried to impose England’s version of Protestantism onto the Scots. In response, thousands of citizens including Scottish nobility and aristocrats trekked to Edinburgh to sign The National Covenant declaring their intention to uphold “true religion”⁸. Moreover, during the first English civil war in 1642, which pitted the Royalists against the Parliamentarist, Scots were only willing to assist Charles I because he agreed to introduce Presbyterianism (the version of Protestantism that Scotland followed) into England following the war. Once it became

⁶ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 93

⁷ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 93. However, many elites still held onto their Catholic identity such as the Stuarts, who would inherit the English and throne in the 1600s.

⁸ Charles Rogers, “Rehearsal of Events Which Occurred in the North of Scotland from 1635 to 1645, in Relation to the National Covenant,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 5 (1877): 355.

apparent that he was not going to go through with his agreement, the Scots invaded England. Thus, we can see how important religion was to the Scots.

The 1707 Act of Union further tied Scotland to Protestantism. The act itself dissolved the parliament of England and Scotland by replacing it with a shared parliament between the two countries, resulting in the formation of Great Britain. This change arose out of the fear that after Queen Anne, who held both the English and Scottish throne, passed away, Scotland would pick an heir different to the one England decided upon. The Act united the people of England and Scotland together through guaranteeing a shared protestant monarch. This move further reinforced Catholics as the 'other' for the people of the newly formed Great Britain to rally against. The anti-Catholicism that existed in Scotland thereafter was so strong that in 1790s Glasgow, there were only thirty-nine recorded Catholics, yet forty-three anti-Catholic societies existed⁹. The link with Britain also made Scots sympathetic to the loyalist cause regarding Ireland and Northern Ireland's internal struggles.

Catholicism began reappearing in Glasgow during the Industrial Revolution. Much like the English cities of Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, Glasgow also started expanding as a center for manufacturing. With an increasing amount of factories, Glasgow needed many more workers. Hoards of Irishmen answered the call and immigrated there. This move was accelerated by the Great Irish famine during the mid nineteenth century, which killed one eighth of Ireland's population and caused mass

⁹ Daniel Burdsey and Robert Chappell, "And If You Know Your History: An Examination of the Formation of Football Clubs in Scotland and their Role in the Construction of Social Identity," *The Sports Historian*, Vol. 21, No. 2, (2001): 96.

migration. Since America was the preferred destination for most Irish émigrés, it was mainly those who could not afford tickets to cross the Atlantic, namely the unskilled working class, which immigrated to Glasgow. By 1851, around one fifth of all Glaswegians were born in Ireland¹⁰. Due to these immigrants coming from such poor conditions, they were willing to take on less income in order to subsist thereby undercutting many of the Scottish workers. It is no surprise that animosity crept in between the two groups.

By the 1870s, however, this antipathy between the Scots and the Irish had mellowed due to Glasgow's booming economy led by the shipbuilding industry. From 1870 to the start of the First World War, Glasgow manufactured one fifth of the world's ships¹¹. In addition, Glasgow was seen as one of Europe's richest cities. Such successes culminated in two International exhibitions, one held in 1888 and one in 1901, to show their advances in industry, science and art. Glasgow was also given the name 'The Second City of Empire' during this period. That is not to say, however, that there was no tension between the two groups (indeed, tensions exist in most cities where a large 'alien' population moves in). Nevertheless, with such a thriving economy, jobs were plentiful during this era, which eased feelings of sectarian hatred. *The Glasgow Herald* alludes to the stability of Glaswegian society by proclaiming, "the bitter feuds still waged between

¹⁰ Jon M.L. Skeide, "Sashes and Rosaries Scottish Sectarianism and the Old Firm" (Masters Thesis., University of Bergen, 2010), 22.

¹¹ Glasgow City Council, "The Second City of Empire- the 19th Century," <http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/AboutGlasgow/History/The+Second+City.htm> (accessed January 29, 2011).

the different denominations in England have long been laid to rest on this side of the border”¹². As we will see later, this stability also extended into ‘The Old Firm’.

Celtics and Catholicism

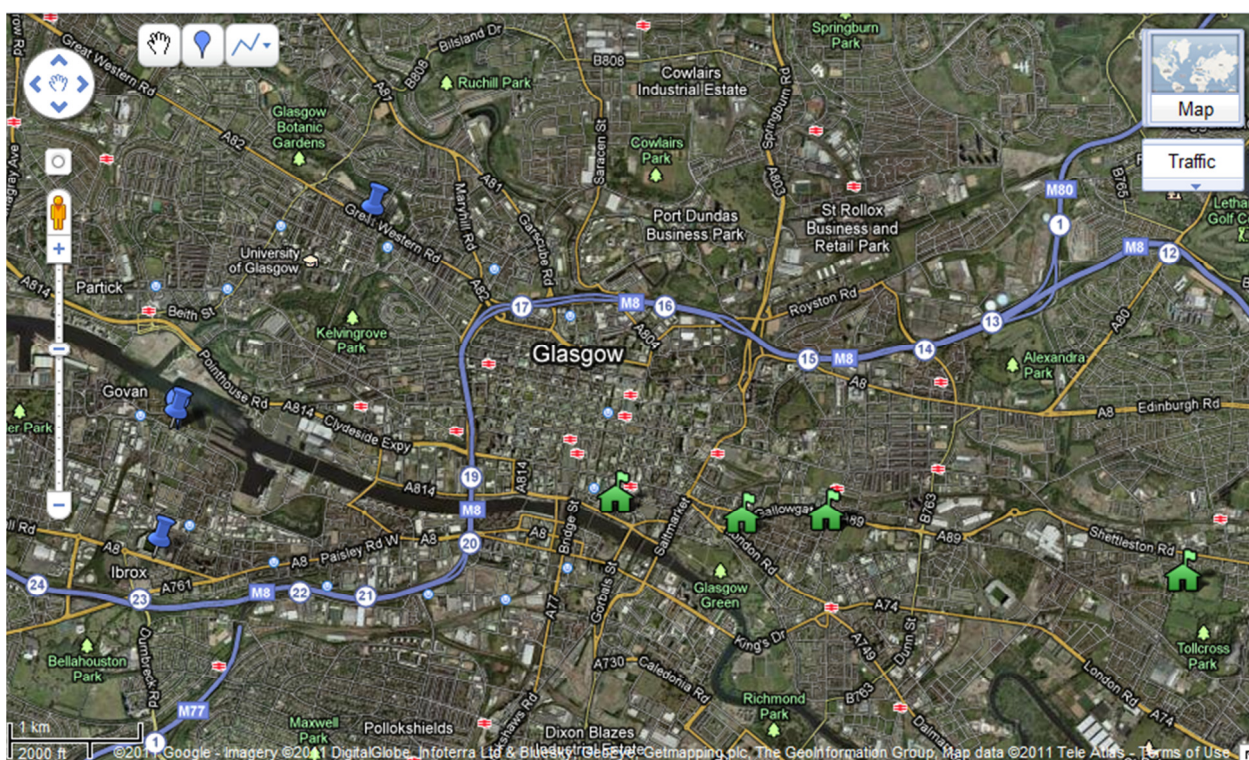
Despite ample job opportunities and relatively few sectarian clashes, Protestants and Catholics rarely mixed. This incompatibility on multiple levels led Glaswegian society to become a virtual apartheid between the two groups. The Catholic Church feared that the Irish immigrants would assimilate into Protestantism thus directed Irish immigrants to socialize amongst themselves leading to the formation of ghettos¹³. It was also this fear of assimilation that led Brother Walfrid, a Marist Brother, to create Celtic Football Club in 1888.

One of the driving forces behind the need for the creation of Celtic F.C was the lack of recreational and social facilities that the Catholics had access to. By looking at a map of Glasgow, which shows the parishes where Brother Walfrid operated, this need becomes clear [Fig 1]. The Catholic areas that Brother Walfrid operated in are marked by the symbol of a house. The major Protestant areas close to the Brother Walfrid’s parishes is marked by a symbol of a pin. As we can see, these Protestant areas and Catholic areas are only several kilometers away from each other. Since Irish immigrants were largely poor and Glaswegian society did not look upon the Irish as ‘their own’, social services and recreational facilities for Catholics were at a premium in this area. Brother Walfrid’s main fear was that the young men from his parishes would be attracted to facilities in the nearby Protestant neighborhoods, which would in turn “tempt young Catholics into

¹² *The Glasgow Herald*, “The Appeal to Sectarian Passion,” December 17, 1909.

¹³ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 97

apostasy”¹⁴. This need was further compounded by the fact that public transportation, especially the subway, was “no use to the residents of the east side of the city”, which is where Brother Walfrid’s parishes were based. This lack of transportation meant that young men from the east end of Glasgow could not easily seek out Catholic facilities in other areas. Thus, we can see how important Catholicism was to Celtic F.C.’s identity from its inception.



[Fig. 1 Map of Brother Walfrid’s parishes and nearby Protestant strongholds. Map compiled by author]¹⁵

Celtic, however, was not the first major Irish Catholic football club in Scotland.

That title belonged to the Edinburgh Hibernians who were founded in 1875. Before

¹⁴ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 60

¹⁵ Locations determined by description in Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 12.

Celtic FC's inauguration, the Hibernians were hugely successful and became the first team from Northern Scotland to win the Scottish Cup in 1887. The Hibernians were very supportive of Celtic FC's birth and actually played in an exhibition match to mark the opening of Celtic Park to "show their friendship for their compatriots in Glasgow"¹⁶. A Hibernian official further remarked that it would be a "sorry day indeed for the Irish in Scotland when the Irish residents of one city should act in an unfriendly way towards those of another"¹⁷. Somewhat ironically, the rise of Celtic FC marked the demise of the Hibernians as the former captured almost half the latter's squad. This fissure amongst the Catholic football community did not only exist between Celtic FC and The Hibernians. Celtic FC literally stole star defender Jerry Reynolds from the Catholic Carfin Shamrock Club in 1889. John Glass, then President of the Celtic FC, showed up to Jerry Reynolds house at midnight and coaxed him, "in his shirt and trousers, to join Celtic at once, and he agreed and drove off safely with his captors, who would have had a rough time if the Carfinites had caught them"¹⁸. This description of events is taken from former Celtic FC manager Willie Maley's book *The Story of the Celtic* and he does not describe their actions in a negative light or appear weary of harming his compatriots. He actually justified the Celtic FC's action by the fact that "there was no restriction in those days to taking a player away from another club, as at that time all players were supposed to be amateurs"¹⁹. Such treachery against fellow Catholics lead one Hibernian fan to lament that "evil deeds never prosper; the duplicity of the founders of the Celtic club will defeat

¹⁶ Murray, "The Old Firm," 68.

¹⁷ Murray, "The Old Firm," 68.

¹⁸ Murray, "The Old Firm," 22.

¹⁹ Maley, "The Story of the Celtic," 38.

is purpose”²⁰. This ‘cannibalism’ within the Irish Catholic football community is surprising because one would assume that, given the closeness amongst the overall Catholic community; Catholic clubs would support rather than destroy each other. Nevertheless, due to their ability to ‘attract’ top Catholic players from Scotland to play for their club, Celtic FC rose very quickly to the top of Scottish football and became the most popular Catholic team along the way. Between 1882 and 1893; they won the Scottish league four times out of six²¹.

Rangers and Protestantism

The Glasgow Rangers, meanwhile, was founded by Moses and Peter McNeil in 1872. They were both footballers from the Gareloch district of Glasgow and played for the Scottish national team at around the time they created the Rangers²². Unlike the Celtic FC, Rangers did not have an overt religious connection to their club at its inception. Instead, the brothers founded the club because they enjoyed the game²³. While the Rangers was a protestant club, they were protestant only in the sense that all other clubs in Scotland not named Hibernians or Celtics were protestant²⁴. The club’s beginnings were humble and they did not have their own grounds. Instead, they would “pay some youngster to stand on the pitch all morning to book it for the game that afternoon”²⁵. By the 1890s, however, the Rangers had built one of the most impressive grounds in Scotland and was one of the most supported teams in the country. The huge rise in

²⁰ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 22.

²¹ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 20.

²² Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 7.

²³ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 13.

²⁴ Skeide, “Sashes and Rosaries Scottish Sectarianism and the Old Firm,” 59.

²⁵ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 13.

popularity of the Rangers is not surprising considering Celtic was one of the more dominant forces in Scottish football yet it had a strictly Irish following.

Sectarian Bigotry in Scottish Football

In line with the relatively stable pre-First World War Glasgow society, the initial years of the rivalry exhibited little evidence of sectarian problems. There actually appeared to be a lack of religiosity connected with football. An article from the *Glasgow Herald*, published in 1894, observed that only Celtic FC would bring their clergymen to games and that other denominations should follow their example²⁶. In addition, the article added that if “they [the clergymen] would identify themselves more with our national sports, and mix more with our youths, we would hear less of the falling away in church attendance”²⁷. This falling of church attendance and encouragement for clergymen to identify with football adds strength to the idea that religious tensions were not too pronounced in Scottish society as well as football. Moreover, it suggested that the Rangers did not have an ultra protestant identity. Indeed, Murray explains that the Rangers “had no hard-line [protestant] policy until the First World War”²⁸. There were actually numerous Catholics who played for the Rangers before the Great War with the most famous being Archie (Punch) Kyle, who was “pinched from under the noses of Celtic in 1904 from Parkhead juniors”²⁹. This lack of sectarian hatred built into the club’s identity was further evident in Sir John Ure Primrose’s, a future president of the Rangers, praising of the Celtic F.C for winning the Glasgow Charity Cup in 1899 and added that they had won the trophy “by as scientific and beautiful an exhibition as ever was seen on

²⁶ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Presentation of the Glasgow Charity Cup,” June 15 1894.

²⁷ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Presentation of the Glasgow Charity Cup,” June 15 1894.

²⁸ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 64.

²⁹ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 64.

any field”³⁰. Interestingly, Primrose was a member of the Orange Order. Rather than denouncing the Celtic F.C for their religious and political orientation, which is what one would expect a member of the Orange Order to do, he appreciated their display on the football pitch, further confirming that the Rangers was not used as an outlet for sectarian hatred.

While the Celtic F.C did have a strong religious affiliation (much more so than the Rangers did), they too had a progressive outlook at the club. As Maley claimed, Celtic was a cosmopolitan club and broadmindedness was the “real stamp” of a good Christian. This was on full display at Celtic Park, where “a man was judged by his football alone”³¹. In fact, during the Celtic F.C’s early years, the club had in its rank Jews, Swedes, and even a Mohammedan³². Furthermore, Maley suggested that Celtic FC could look back on pride at a game played at Celtic Park, the “famous Rosebery International of 1900, in which Scotland gave England one of their greatest defeats”³³. Since the Protestant Scotsman were perceived as the enemy of the Irish, it would be strange to see members of the Celtic cheering for the Scottish national team. This support further suggests that sectarian elements were not too pronounced during the early years of Scottish football.

Celtic and Ranger’s Initial Relationship

Given that the two clubs did not take on militant identities in the early decades, it is not surprising to find that the clubs administrations held cordial relations during the

³⁰ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds,” Jun 8, 1899.

³¹ Maley, “*The Story of the Celtic*,” 33.

³² Maley, “*The Story of the Celtic*,” 33.

³³ Maley, “*The Story of the Celtic*,” 21.

early years of the rivalry. Often, they were bounded together by potential profit, hence the name 'The Old Firm'. The profitability of their matches is evident in a *Glasgow Herald* article, which claimed that when the Celtic FC plays the Rangers, "it goes without saying that there will be a tremendous gate and an interesting encounter"³⁴. This unity between the two clubs in search for profit was apparent in a cup final series between them in April 1909, where two games in a succession of two weeks ended in draws. This created huge discontent amongst the crowd and there was a feeling that the results were prearranged so that they could have another replay to generate more gate receipts³⁵. Moreover, the *Scottish Referee* published an illustration titled 'Parting at the Bank' in 1908, which depicted a Rangers player and a Celtic player jointly holding a bag of money and heading to a bank together [Fig 2]³⁶.

[Fig. 2 'Parting at the Bank'] Image reproduced in Murray's *The Old Firm* but a copy could be seen at the following URL: <http://www.thecelticwiki.com/page/Caroons+-+Parting+at+the+Bank>.

Aside from profits, the two clubs also had a shared interest in professionalizing the game. Before the professionalization of Scottish football, "England had an open door to the North and came and took away what she wanted" because Scottish clubs could not officially pay their players³⁷. As the two most financially successful teams in Scotland, professionalization would allow them to completely take over Scottish football. That is because professionalization, which basically entails allowing players to receive official

³⁴ *The Glasgow Herald*, "Special Notes on Sports," Nov 12, 1894.

³⁵ *Poverty Bay Herald*, "Football Riot," Jun 3, 1909.

³⁶ *Scottish Referee*, "Parting at the Bank," Feb 10, 1908. Cited in Murray, "*The Old Firm*," 42.

³⁷ Maley, "*The Story of the Celtic*," 10.

wages, would allow them to flex their financial muscle and buy the best players from other clubs. Their joint interest in securing professionalization is seen in a *Glasgow Herald* article, which claimed that the Celtic and the Rangers “have no scruples in regard to professionalism”³⁸. Moreover, we see incidents of the Celtic and Rangers hierarchy defending each other when the SFA tried to penalize the other team for paying their players before professionalization became official. In 1893, Rangers was being threatened with removal from the SFA due to “liberal expenses paid to athletes” while Celtic was threatened with sanctions for paying railway fares for their players. The Celtic F.C sent official J. H McLaughlin to second the Rangers’ motion for their own punishment to be annulled. In return, the Rangers sent their treasurer J.S Marr to defend the Celtic against their sanction, gaining the nickname “the Celtic’s Advocate”³⁹. In the same year, McLaughlin forwarded a motion for professionalism to be legitimized and explained, “you might as well attempt to stop the flow of the Niagara with a kitchen chair as to endeavor to stem the tide of professionalism”⁴⁰. Unsurprisingly, the Rangers representative backed up this claim and professionalism was passed in 1893.

Old Firm Violence before the First World War

This cordial relationship between the two clubs administration also extended to the fans. Violence was few and far between. The only major clash of note took place during the previously mentioned Cup Final series in 1909 between the Rangers and Celtic. Maley mentioned this incident in his book *The Story of the Celtic*. He claimed that the Scottish Cup Final of 1909 was an “exhibition of mob law which fortunately for the

³⁸ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Note on Sports,” May 10, 1897.

³⁹ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 20.

⁴⁰ Spartacus Educational, “Scottish Football Association,” Spartacus Educational, <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Fsfa.htm> (accessed April 19, 2011).

good name of football had never happened before, nor has it been repeated”⁴¹. The

Poverty Bay Herald, painted a picture of the scene:

Ambulance men soon had their hands more than full, and medical men were seen with their coats off attending to the many broken heads. The crowd was a cowardly one, as they fell on every policemen who happened to lag behind his fellows. Many bad scalp wounds fell to the lot of the constables, who in turn did not spare those who came within the reach of their batons. Bottles and everything to hand were thrown indiscriminately at the charging police. One band of roughs set fire to the pay boxes, which were soon ablaze. The fire brigade was called out and they in turn were attacked. The fire hose was cut in several places, and this made the work of the fireman futile. The firemen, who were very badly treated, threatened to retaliate with their fire axes, but were prevented by their officers. Meantime motor ambulances were heard whistling in their hurry to the field, and quite a score of the worst injured, including a boy of six with a fractured skull, were removed to the infirmary. The Police were so out-numbered that they deemed it judicious not to make any arrests”⁴².

While the recounting of the events did make it sound horrific, there was no mention of any violence between the Rangers and Celtic fans. Instead, it seemed both sets of supporters were working together against the authorities. Indeed, supporters from both sides, mainly from the working class, undoubtedly spent a large portion of their week’s pay to watch the cup final and felt cheated out of their money after the game ended in a draw. The suspicion that the Celtic and Rangers fixed the draw so that they can take in even more revenue in a replay exacerbated this feeling of indignity. It is important to note that football hooliganism was mainly a working class phenomenon and a photo of the riot mainly showed men in dark suits and flat top hats, clothing that is indicative of a lower

⁴¹ Maley, *“The Story of the Celtic,”* 140.

⁴² *Poverty Bay Herald*, “Football Riot,” Jun 3, 1909.

social standing [Fig. 3]⁴³. The fact that the only real riot of note during Old Firm matches before the First World War exhibited a united front amongst both sets of fans against the perceived greediness of the two clubs showed that ‘The Old Firm’ was a far cry from the one we are familiar with today.

[Fig. 3] Riot Scene from the 1909 Scottish Club Final URL:

http://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/article/2010/10/01/215541_opinion.html.

Football and Scottish Society

Instead of being an arena for bigotry, football in nineteenth century Glasgow was seen as being beneficial to society. Much like in England during the same era, many Scottish middle and upper class elites felt football helped strengthen the morality and health of its participants (as either spectators or players). This view was evident when Sir John Ure Primrose said in 1899, that he “keenly appreciated the place it [football] occupied in the economy of their city life. It was delightful to find thousands of the sons of toil gathering together in an enclosure on a Saturday afternoon to witness a display of manly strength and courage, and wished more of his colleagues would honor the field of sport with their presence”⁴⁴. In addition, Lord Provost Sir David Richmond said, in reference to the swath of young Glaswegian men heading to play football on weekends, “I do feel convinced now, whatever they did before, that they are employing their time well on Saturday afternoons in getting good healthful exercise”⁴⁵. He later added that he had “great admiration for pluck, energy and endurance, no matter in what sphere of life

⁴³ Roy Hay, “Draw a Recipe for Woe,” Geelong Advertiser, http://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/article/2010/10/01/215541_opinion.html (accessed October 30, 2010).

⁴⁴ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds,” June 8, 1899.

⁴⁵ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Presentation of the Glasgow Charity Cup,” June 15 1894.

those were developed”⁴⁶. Men of religion also echoed these sentiments, as Reverend Dr. A. R. MacEwan claimed that in his 25 years involved with football, “there had been a great improvement in the behavior of his young men. In this connection, the growth and development of athleticism deserved every credit”⁴⁷. Football was able to give such benefits to its players because it taught young men how to follow the rules of the game even under physical pressure leading to improved morality. Moreover, attending football matches drew men away from the public house. These effects mirrors those found in England.

The Interwar Period

After coming out of The First World War, Glasgow’s economy quickly plummeted and thus began a depression that lasted until The Second World War. Naturally, unemployment was prevalent. In 1933, when the depression was at its worst, 30 per cent of the city's insured population was unemployed⁴⁸. Evidence of this problem is further found in a Parliamentary Debate on the Unemployment Insurance Act, a legislature that prevents men who “has not worked for a reasonable period during the past two years” to claim benefits⁴⁹. Mr. Buchannan claimed that this was unfair and was “heedless of the fact that there has been no opportunity for it [employment]”⁵⁰. A New York Times article further added, “Glasgow has been hit worse than any other British city”⁵¹. The shipbuilding industry, which was based along the Clyde River and was

⁴⁶ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds,”

⁴⁷ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds,”

⁴⁸ The Glasgow Story, “No Mean City 1915-1940,” The Glasgow Story, <http://www.theglasgowstory.com/storye.php> (accessed April 18, 2011).

⁴⁹ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 189, (08 Dec 1925): 407.

⁵⁰ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 189, (08 Dec 1925): 407.

⁵¹ *New York Times*, “British Unemployment and Emigration,” May 23, 1924.

fundamental to Glasgow's economy, was hit especially hard and by 1924, this industry's unemployment rate was 34%⁵². The situation got more and more precarious and by 1931, this figure had risen to 53%⁵³.

When so many people were put out of work, it is hardly astonishing that the unemployed felt aggrieved towards those who still had jobs. The unemployed Protestants Scots looked to blame the Irish Catholics for their troubles. An article in the *Milwaukee Journal* written in 1928 states that several clerical bodies were trying to halt Irish immigration into Glasgow and that this kind of demonstration has "periodically recurred on the Clyde during more than 100 years when ever trade was bad"⁵⁴. In addition, Mr. Buchanan, a Member of Parliament for the Gorbals district of Glasgow, reported in 1932 that many of his constituents complained, "The Irish have taken our jobs. They are coming across here and taking our work"⁵⁵.

During the inter-war period, Ireland was also going through its independence struggle with Britain, which added fuel to the sectarian fire. Given the already tense situation between the Protestant and the Catholics, the fact that Ireland was trying to remove itself from the Union further exacerbated animosity. As Scottish historian James J. Smyth explains, the Easter Rising of 1916, which was a rebellion led by Irish Republicans against the Union, made "Irish a synonym for treachery"⁵⁶. The war of

⁵² *New York Times*, "British Unemployment and Emigration,"

Also seen In George Blake's *The Shipbuilders*, whose story centered around the closing of a shipyard on the Clyde

⁵³ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 249, (11 Mar 1931): 1161.

⁵⁴ *The Milwaukee Journal*, "Irish Labor is Hope of Scotch Industry," Mar 30, 1928.

⁵⁵ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 272, (24 Nov 1932): 235-360

⁵⁶ James J. Smyth, "Resisting Labor: Unionists, Liberals, and Moderates in Glasgow Between the Wars," *The Historical Journal* Vol 46, No. 2 (2003): 391.

independence that followed and support for Sinn Fein “only served to confirm this judgment”⁵⁷. In fact, during the 1930s, many Scots took advantage of this great fear and hatred of the Irish to take jobs away from the Catholics. One legislation, which Scots used, was the Prevention of Violence Bill. This was a Bill passed in response to IRA (Irish Republican Army) bombings throughout Britain and gave the British government power to deport people suspected of being connected to the IRA. In a Parliamentary debate on this Bill, Mr. Buchanan complained, “every man who is Irish and working will be liable to be informed against, not because he has done anything wrong, but because he is thought to have taken the job of somebody else”⁵⁸. There was one example of a man who was taken into custody without a warrant (this was quite commonplace). It turned out that it was his wife who was connected to the IRA and the man, an innocent platelayer, had no connection at all with the Irish Republican cause. The man, however, was still imprisoned and by the time he was released, someone else filled his job.

Actual Flaring of Sectarianism Bigotry and Violence in Football Games

Given such a tense atmosphere in Glaswegian Society, it is not surprising that sectarian bigotry and violence between the Celtic FC and Rangers fans (mainly from the working class) became frequent during the interwar period. Blake alludes to the increasing clashes in his novel *The Shipbuilders*. Describing the scene of an Old Firm game, he suggests that “it was as if a fever of hate had seized that multitude, neutralizing for the time everything gracious and kindly”⁵⁹. The sacredness and seriousness of the rivalry is further confirmed when Blake described the journey to an Old Firm game on

⁵⁷ Smyth, “*Resisting Labor*,” 391.

⁵⁸ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 350, (24 July 1939): 1047-1127.

⁵⁹ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 89.

the crowded Glasgow underground as “at worst, a purgatorial episode on the passage to Elysium”⁶⁰. In response to Celtic missing a penalty kick, Danny, one of the story’s protagonists and a protestant man working at a shipbuilding facility on the River Clyde, screamed “Stick it lads, Kick the tripes out of the dirty Papists”, displaying the sectarian hatred in football that rose with economic depression⁶¹. It was also during this period that the Billy Boys, a notorious gang from Bridgeton (a Protestant stronghold), started chanting “we’re up to our knees in Fenian Blood, Surrender or you’ll die! For we are the Bridgeton Billy Boys” at ‘Old Firm’ games⁶². These lyrics further confirmed that by the inter-war period, the Rangers had become an outlet of sectarian and racial hatred for the Scottish Protestants.

The Protestants, however, were not the only ones screaming sectarian and racial abuses to their opposing fans. An article from *The Glasgow Observer*, recorded that amongst the songs frequently heard at ‘Old Firm’ games sung by Celtic fans was Glorious Saint Patrick, ‘God Save Ireland’, and ‘The Soldier’s Song’. The contents of these songs are, of course, highly provocative to the Scottish public⁶³. For example, The Soldier’s Song’s lyrics include:

“Soldiers are we, whose lives are pledged to Ireland. Sons of the Gael! Men of the Pale! The Long watched day is breaking; The serried ranks of Innisfail Shall set the tyrant quaking. Our camp fires

⁶⁰ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 84. Elysium was a section of the underworld and was the final resting place for the heroic and virtuous of Ancient Greece.

⁶¹ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 91.

⁶² *The Glasgow Herald*, “Disturbance in Glasgow Railway Station,” May 1, 1834. This is a song, which unfortunately is still sung by Rangers fans to this day.

⁶³ *The Glasgow Observer*, Jan 8 1921.

now are burning low; See in the east a silvery glow, Out yonder waits the saxon foe, So sing a soldier's song"⁶⁴.

Given the tense atmosphere with the Irish war of independence, the 'saxon foe' would seem like a reference to Scottish Protestants. In addition, the mention of leaving the tyrant 'quaking' could be misconstrued as the superiority and dominance of the Irish over the Scots. Obviously, such lyrics could easily lead to angry responses from the Scots at the game. Furthermore, whenever the Celtics won a match, their brake clubs would often write down the scores of the game on their charabancs but switched the Celtic's name for Sinn Fein. As previously mentioned, support for Sinn Fein was a "synonym for treachery" and the fact that the Celtic fans openly pledged their allegiance amidst this tense atmosphere suggests they were looking for trouble.

Naturally, this sectarian bigotry led to violence. For example, in an Old Firm match that took place in October 1925, 196 men, all members of Celtic or Rangers brake clubs, were arrested for "having conducted themselves in a disorderly manner and committed a breach of the peace"⁶⁵. In addition, during this time period, use of bugles, flags and banners were banned from football grounds in Glasgow to prevent provocation. Plain-clothes policemen also had to follow the charabancs of brake clubs around to ensure they do not create disorder⁶⁶. To further prevent public clashes, the police required Celtic and Rangers brake clubs to drive their charabancs through completely different routes to stop them from crossing paths, threatening to penalize those who do not follow

⁶⁴ Ancestry.com, "The Lyrics Page," Ancestry.com, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~irelandlist/lyrics.html>, (accessed Feb 25, 2011).

⁶⁵ *The Glasgow Herald*, "Wholesale Arrests," Oct 7, 1925.

⁶⁶ *The Glasgow Herald*, "Wholesale Arrests,"

such provisions⁶⁷. Moreover, the two sets of fans had to be segregated by the police to two different sides of the stadium⁶⁸. As we can see, there was an obvious increase in sectarian clashes between the two sets of fans during the inter-war period, so much so that special measures were taken by the police to try to and stop the opposing fans from crossing paths.

Sectarian Violence in the Rest of Scottish Society

While sectarian clashes and violence in Old Firm matches became a common sight in Glasgow, it was no different to the rest of Scottish society. The poor economic conditions that lead to the violence at games also enabled the rise of ultra right wing Protestants, such as John Cormack of the Scottish Protestant League, to political prominence. He was a leader who was “on record as advocating the disenfranchisement of Roman Catholics in Britain and their expulsion from Scotland”⁶⁹. It was also he who led two of the worst sectarian riots in 20th century Scotland. In June 1935, Cormack and his followers protested against Edinburgh conferring the freedom of the city to Joseph Lyons, prime minister of Australia and a Catholic. He, however, took no action against Edinburgh giving the freedom of the city to a Hindu at the same ceremony⁷⁰. This showed that Scottish society only held prejudice against the Catholics and not other minorities. Cormack confirms this selective hatred in an interview in which he proclaimed he was only “against the principle of conferring the freedom of the city to a Catholic”⁷¹. An article from *The Age* also added that majority of residents of Edinburgh

⁶⁷ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Instructions to Drivers,” Dec 31 1923.

⁶⁸ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 85.

⁶⁹ Tom Gallagher, *Glasgow: The Uneasy Peace* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 159.

⁷⁰ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 115.

⁷¹ *The Age*, “Unpleasant Incident,” June 11, 1935.

agreed with Cormack's view⁷². In a second incident, Cormack led a group of 10,000 Protestants to protest at a Eucharistic Congress, which was being held in Edinburgh. As *The New York Times* describes, "cries of no popery and down with the pope were huried at Catholics as they arrived at the priory"⁷³. In addition, around 3,000 Protestants were charged for hurling bottles and stones at Catholic women and priests⁷⁴. From these examples, we see that sectarian hatred in Old Firm matches was in line with what was happening in the rest of society, not an anomaly.

Sectarian Hatred between the Members of Celtic and Rangers

Juxtaposing the vehement bigotry that the Celtic and Rangers fan espouse to each other, as well as sectarian clashes in the rest of Scotland, those associated with the running of Celtic F.C continued to show tolerance and understanding. The case of John Thompson illustrates this tolerance. Thompson was Celtic's goalkeeper during the latter half of the 1920s who tragically died in an Old Firm match when he clashed with Rangers striker Samuel English. He was also a Scottish Protestant, two traits that ostensibly put him at odds with everything the Celtics stood for. Despite his nationality and religious inclination, Maley still gave a glowing tribute to Thompson:

"Among the galaxy of talented goalkeepers who Celtic have had, the late lamented John Thompson was the greatest. A most likeable lad, modest and unassuming, he was popular wherever he went. In all he did there was balance and beauty of movement wonderful to watch. Among the great Celts who have passed over, he has an honored place"⁷⁵

⁷² *The Age*, "Unpleasant Incident,"

⁷³ *The New York Times*, "Protestants Crying No Popery Jams Streets," June 26 1935.

⁷⁴ *The New York Times*, "Protestants Crying No Popery Jams Streets,"

⁷⁵ Maley, "*The Story of the Celtic*," 164.

Moreover, Maley absolved English from blame and described the incident as a “fatal tragedy”⁷⁶. Maley’s reaction was very different to the Celtic fans as they started chanting “Kill English”⁷⁷. These chants prompted counter cheers from Rangers fans and eventually, multiple fights broke out between the two sets of fans⁷⁸.

Rangers and Inter-War Sectarianism

While those associated with the running of Celtic F.C showed little sectarian inclination, the Rangers was a different story. It was in the 1920s, during the economic downturn, that the Rangers started rigidly following a ‘no catholic’ policy meaning no one amongst the Ranger’s ranks could hold allegiance to the pope. This ‘no catholic’ policy became an enduring Rangers legacy, which lasted well into the 1980s. The reason why Rangers leaders reached this decision was largely due to the occupations of their biggest shareholders, who were mainly manufactures, merchants and managers”⁷⁹. The fact that Ranger’s presidents were often drawn from the aristocracy (Sir John Ure Primrose serves as an example), certainly played a part in pushing Rangers towards this decision. To understand their motivations, we must first look into the political and social developments of the inter-war years.

Coming out of the Great War, labor was gaining strength and militancy. In 1919, workers started the forty hours strike, Glasgow’s “most notorious industrial dispute”⁸⁰. The Secretary of Scotland described the strike as a “Bolshevist Uprising”⁸¹. Politically, the Labor Party was ready to push the middle class and elites out of the municipal offices.

⁷⁶ Maley, “*The Story of the Celtic*,” 164.

⁷⁷ *Evening Post*, “Angry Scenes,” 30 September, 1931.

⁷⁸ *Evening Post*, “Angry Scenes,”

⁷⁹ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 83.

⁸⁰ Smyth, “*Resisting Labor*,” 380.

⁸¹ Smyth, “*Resisting Labor*,” 380.

Since this was an era of economic downturn, it is logical that the Labor Party was gaining strength as workers wanted more social welfare. Evidence of Labor's gain was apparent in the 1922 elections, which exhibited a "seismic shift of political loyalties" as Labor won ten of Glasgow's constituencies⁸². These developments were also mirrored in other parts of Scotland. The rising power of the Labor Party struck huge fear into the elites and the middle class. This fear was apparent in the formation of an alliance between the Liberal and the Conservatives solely for keeping Labor out of office⁸³. This coalition also included significant Unionist members.

There was also a fear amongst the middle class and the elites that Protestant and Catholic workers would find common ground in their support for the Labor Party. This support would buttress labor's power even further, as one 1920s commentator lamented, "a program for the exploitation of the 'Haves' in the interest of the 'Have-nots' will never lack numerical backing"⁸⁴. However, not all of the working class voters supported the Labor Party. There were also significant portions of Scottish workers who associated the Labor Party with Catholicism and held firm to their Protestant identity in addition to their hatred of the Irish. The Labor party became associated with the Irish Catholic community because of its support for the controversial 1918 Education Act, which brought Catholic schools into the Scottish state system while allowing them to maintain their religious identity. Protestant Scots were unhappy with this legislation because it drained Glasgow's already dwindling funds and gave it directly to the Catholics. Noticing that sectarianism could lower the support for Labor, "prominent politicians, churchmen, intellectuals, even

⁸² Smyth, "*Resisting Labor*," 379.

⁸³ Smyth, "*Resisting Labor*," 377.

⁸⁴ Smyth, "*Resisting Labor*," 381.

the aristocracy all contributed to the growing perception of the Catholic-Irish as a threat, not just to the Protestant religion but to the Scottish race”⁸⁵. Industrialist also incited sectarian tensions by threatening to “bring in the Irish” whenever they were faced with industrial action⁸⁶.

The stringent ‘no catholic’ policy could largely be seen as a way for the middle class and elites to solidify the Rangers’ Protestant identity. This club policy intensified the rivalry and further exasperated sectarian tensions, which helped to further stem back the labor tide. Since the largest Rangers shareholders were manufacturers, merchants and managers, they depended on the working class for their profit. Any increase in labor power would put them in an unfavorable position. Meanwhile the Scottish aristocracy and elites, much like their counterparts in England (discussed in the previous chapter), felt that politics was ‘their realm’ and working class encroachment was a threat to their prestige. Inciting sectarian hatred severed one potential bond between the Catholic and Protestant working class, that is, poor socioeconomic conditions. Indeed, as we have seen, this poverty actually became a point of division between the two groups as they blamed each other for their plight. This strategy by the middle class and elites is almost analogous to the example we saw in England in the previous chapter. That is, the elites were able to control working class power by allowing them to lose themselves’ in the intensity of football. On the other hand, the Celtic hierarchy’s lack of sectarian hatred was possibly due to the occupational make up of their shareholders, which mainly

⁸⁵ Smyth, “*Resisting Labor*,” 390.

⁸⁶ Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol 272, (24 Nov 1932): 235-360.

consisted of publicans⁸⁷. As such, they were less threatened by the rising power of labor since they did not directly depend on working class labor for their own income. Indeed, an increase of labor power could increase the wages of the masses, which would bring publicans even more potential profit.

Positive Aspects of the Old Firm

Football Providing an Escape for the Working Man

Despite the ostensible discord emanating between the two different set of supporters, there seemed to be some positive aspects to ‘The Old Firm’. For working class men, attending football games, especially the emotionally charged Old Firm matches, gave them a “release from the drabness of their own industrial degradation”⁸⁸. Besides from industrial degradation, the rivalry also became a “useful tension releasing valve” to vent their anger against communities, which they felt were responsible for their plight⁸⁹. Franklin Foer makes a similar argument in his book *How Soccer Explains the World*, where he asserts that Generalissimo Franco, the dictator of Spain from 1945 to 1975, left Barcelona FC alone despite their supporters openly flaunting their Catalan origins and deriding Franco’s Spain because it allowed Catalan people to “channel their political energies into a harmless pastime”⁹⁰. As a result, the Catalans, unlike other minorities such as the Basque “never joined liberation fronts or kidnapped Madrid bank presidents or exploded bombs at bus stations”⁹¹.

⁸⁷ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 83.

⁸⁸ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 91..

⁸⁹ Gallagher, “*The Uneasy Peace*,” 3.

⁹⁰ Franklin Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 205.

⁹¹ Foer, “*How Soccer Explains the World*,” 205.

Attributing a pacifying quality to the Old Firm rivalry may seem counter intuitive as the leaders of the Rangers did openly foster sectarian hatred. However, this was true for most Protestant elites in Scottish society at large during the interwar period. The existence of the Old Firm rivalry actually served as a relatively safer outlet for this sectarian anger and prevented uglier scenes from taking place in Glasgow. The benefits of this rivalry are apparent when Glasgow is juxtaposed with cities such as Edinburgh, which were not as fortunate in that they did not have a football rivalry as symbolically loaded as 'The Old Firm'. This took away a valuable outlet of tension leading to the much more violent displays such as those lead by Cormack. Since immersing themselves into the rivalry gave the working class an escape and a vent for their anger, 'The Old Firm' has helped mitigate the potential for large-scale violent clashes. This effect essentially follows a 'Bread and Circuses' argument. That is, by showing the people a 'bloody' spectacle, the elites and middle class were able to provide a "narcotic for the masses"⁹². While this may not be in the true interest of the working class since their minds are diverted from fighting for their social rights, it does create a more harmonious society.

Mitigating Domestic Violence

Another problem that was prevalent in Glaswegian society was domestic violence, which arose due to the tough economic conditions. The high level of unemployment and declining wages in the inter-war years left many men feeling emasculated as having a job and being able to support a family was a source of

⁹² The Ethical Spectacle, "Bread and Circuses," The Ethical Spectacle, <http://www.spectacle.org/496/dream.html> (accessed April 15, 2011).

masculinity. In addition, the declining heavy industry such as shipbuilding caused “male identities cohering around a notion of toughness associated with the qualities deemed necessary to master heavy industrial work” to be rendered obsolete⁹³. Because of this emasculation, wives were frequently abused at home as a way for these men to restore feelings of masculinity. Dr. Robertson, a resident of the Gorbals (a poor area of Glasgow), confirms the prevalence of this problem: “Normally a child of between eight and fourteen years of age would come rushing into the Southern Division Police Station shouting: ‘Ma faither’s killin’ ma mither’”⁹⁴. Attending Old Firm matches, however, provided another sphere in which men could release their frustration and express their masculinity. Blake alludes to this effect of the rivalry in his description of an Old Firm match, “In moments of high tension they raved obscenely, using a language ugly and violent in its wealth of explosive consonants- f’s and k’s and b’s expression the vehemence of their passions”. Blake then added that, Danny was “as ready as the next man to fight a supporter of the other team”⁹⁵. This release of emotions was effective since, after the match, “Danny was happy and in his contentment thought kindly of Agnes [his wife] at home” despite the fact that Agnes constantly makes jibes at his working-man’s ways, at what she regarded as the limitations of their condition”⁹⁶. Through providing a space for men to express their masculinity, Old Firm matches helped somewhat alleviate the problems of domestic violence in Glasgow.

⁹³ Annmarie Hughes, “Working Class Culture, Family Life, and Domestic Violence on Clydeside, c 1918-1939: A View from Below, *Scottish Tradition*, Vol. 27 (2002): 75.

⁹⁴ Hughes, “Working Class Culture,” 70.

⁹⁵ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 86.

⁹⁶ Blake, “*The Shipbuilders*,” 29.

Charitable Activities of the Two Clubs

While the sectarian rivalry of the two clubs was a phenomenon from the inter-war period, the charitable activities of both clubs has been constant throughout the entirety of the clubs' existence. Undoubtedly, the profitability of the Old Firm rivalry aids the amount of charitable work the two clubs are able to engage in. This beneficial effect of the rivalry is evident in the 1899 Glasgow Football Charity Cup, where the final was played between the Rangers and the Celtic. The total amount of money disbursed to different charities was £950⁹⁷. This figure was £200 higher than the previous year's competition where the final was played between the Rangers and Third Lanark⁹⁸. Moreover, the Celtic F.C added an additional £15 donation⁹⁹. Amongst the recipients of that year's charity allocation were Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic organization, and the Govan Nurse Fund (Govan is a predominantly Protestant neighborhood near the Rangers stadium). In addition, most of the charities who received money from this competition made their services available to the public regardless of religion, further confirming that the charitable benefits of 'The Old Firm' transcended religious and racial barriers¹⁰⁰.

This tradition continued throughout the Inter-War period and in 1938, The Glasgow Charity Cup took in £4,110. Once again, the final was played between the Celtic and Rangers. Sir John T. Cargill, owner of Burmah Oil Company and President of the Rangers, commented that the high sum taken in by the competition was "due to the

⁹⁷ *The Glasgow Herald*, "Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds," Jun 8, 1899.

⁹⁸ *The Glasgow Herald*, "Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds,"

⁹⁹ *The Glasgow Herald*, "Glasgow Charity Cup- Allocation of Funds,"

¹⁰⁰ Wray Vamplew, "Remembering Us Year After Year: The Glasgow Charity Cup 1876-1966," *Records*, Vol. 1, No. 27 (2008): 23.

fact that the final had been contested by the Old Firm”¹⁰¹. In fact, the Glasgow Charity Cup was so successful that it spawned many similar competitions all of Great Britain. None of those competitions, however, matched up to the amount raised by the Glasgow Charity Cup (for example, from 1920 to 1929, the Glasgow Charity Cup took in £46,630 dwarfing the English Football Association Charity Shield’s £7,587¹⁰²). Therefore, we can see that the Old Firm rivalry actually made some very tangible contributions to Glasgow society. It was the intense rivalry, spurred into real sectarian hatred during the inter-war period, which increased gate receipts. This increase in gates resulted in more money for charities, which were attempting mitigate problems related to unemployment and inequality. The irony is great because it was the large unemployment and poor economy, which made the rivalry violent and added to the amount of gates money these ‘Old Firm’ games could draw. These charities in turn, sought to rectify some of these societal problems.

Conclusion

Overall, we see that the Celtic-Ranger relationship, at least up until the Second World War, was not the ugliest example of football rivalry as some commentators make it out to be. From the beginnings of the rivalry to the First World War, sectarian bigotry and violence between the two sets of fans was rare. While tensions did flare during the inter-war period, this was no different to what was happening in the rest of Scottish society. The rivalry actually seemed to have brought many benefits to Glaswegian and Scottish society. Although the amount of charity money that the rivalry was able to generate was hugely advantageous for society, it was its purpose as an outlet for the

¹⁰¹ *The Glasgow Herald*, “Celtic’s Golden Jubilee,” Jun 16, 1938.

¹⁰² Wray Vamplew, “Remembering Us Year After Year,” 23.

working class Protestants' and Catholics' anger that did the most benefit for society. If given the choice, Glaswegians would undoubtedly pick the existence of this football rivalry over the other more violent alternatives on display in the rest of Britain. Therefore, rather than being 'Scotland's Secret Shame', Glaswegians should be grateful for the existence of both clubs.

Chapter 3: Soccer, a True Reflection of America?

Introduction

“Soccer is not an American sport!” decried an American Football coach, before going on to derogatory remarks about soccer players “running around in their little shorts”¹.

When one thinks of sports in the United States, soccer is not the first thing that comes to mind. Most people certainly do not equate soccer to American identity the way they do with football or baseball. If we look at soccer’s role in American society from the seventies to the nineties, however, we see that this sport reflected many larger changes that were taking place including the rise of the Yuppies, the remaking of the ‘melting pot’ American identity, and the feminist movement. For the Yuppies, the main beneficiaries of President Ronald Reagan’s conservative revolution, soccer served as a tool to distinguish themselves against the masses. Feminists and supporters of the feminist movement, on the other hand, used women soccer as a means of contrasting themselves against conservative masculine America. Meanwhile, minorities used soccer as a vehicle to express their home nationalist pride. Soccer allowed these groups to juxtapose themselves against other members of society and to form their unique class, ethnic, gender or political identity while ultimately avoiding overt confrontation.

Part 1: Soccer and the Yuppies

Severe inflation laid the foundation for a new consumer culture during the Carter era. Double-digit inflation in the seventies diminished the value of people’s savings and

¹ *The New York Times*, “Soccer, Soccer Everywhere,” Nov. 9, 1982.

thriftiness became just “plain dumb”². This inflation turned American’s from savers into borrowers, ushering in a new generation more focused on consumption with a “buy now and worry later” mentality³. Reagan’s focus on the market and policies of deregulation across many industries helped revive the economy and further spurred consumerism. Deregulation also gave many people and corporations a chance for huge profits through taking over functions that the government previously served, such as security. In addition, Reagan’s tax reductions increased the amount of disposable income in society, further fueling the culture of consumption.

Against the backdrop of Reaganomics rose the Yuppies, a class of young professionals who were devoted to getting rich⁴. Although Yuppies are categorized as young professionals who earned over \$40,000 a year and worked in professional or management jobs, in reality many were not as well off. Only 4 million out of the 20 million baby boom generation white-collar workers fit this description⁵. While the official definition of a Yuppie was an upwardly mobile Young Urban Professional, ‘upwardly mobile’ was a misnomer and “if anything, Yuppie culture is permeated with a sense of downward mobility, of couples struggling with two incomes to achieve a middle-class life that their parents enjoyed with one”⁶. Many Yuppies, therefore, actively looked for distinctions between themselves and the lower class to preserve their middle class identity. In addition, the ‘urban’ part of a ‘young urban professional’ also seemed to be a misnomer as only 30 percent of the baby boomers (aged 25 to 39) who fit the

² Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2001), 135.

³ Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 135.

⁴ *Newsweek*, “The Year of the Yuppie,” Dec 31, 1984.

⁵ *Newsweek*, “The Year of the Yuppie,” Dec 31, 1984.

⁶ Michael Kinsley “Arise, Ye Yuppies!”, *The New Republic*, Jul 9 1984, 41.

\$40,000 or above income bracket lived in cities⁷. In fact, during the eighties, there was an exodus of young white-collar workers, especially those with families, into the suburbs and this was demonstrated by the doubling of property prices in neighborhoods such as Westchester County or Long Island⁸. Real estate agents in these areas also reported that young professionals served as their main client base⁹.

Soccer and the Conspicuous Culture

Due to the fact that many young white-collar workers could not afford the middle class lifestyle their parents enjoyed in the 1950s and 1960s, Yuppies resorted to buying upscale products as a means of distinguishing their class. The Yuppies' adopted a "cultural cosmopolitanism" ethos to consumption in order to show "worldly refinement", resulting in a proliferation of affordable luxuries such as French brie or German cars¹⁰. Moreover, the high prices of these products excluded the working class, preventing Yuppies from 'falling out' of the middle class.

It was in these Yuppie-filled neighborhoods that soccer became a fabric of suburban life. For Yuppies, appreciating soccer was like appreciating a "fine slab of imported goat cheese"¹¹. Compared to other American sports, soccer exuded a "kind of romance" that basketball, baseball and football lacked¹². This worldly refinement in sports helped separate Yuppies against the working class, who still preferred 'American

⁷ *Newsweek*, "The Year of the Yuppie," Dec 31, 1984.

⁸ Ellen Hopkins, "Back to the Suburbs," *New York Magazine*, Sept 1 1986, 26.

⁹ Hopkins, "Back to the Suburbs," 26.

¹⁰ David L. Andrews, Robert Pitter, Detlev Zwick, and Daarren Ambrose, "Soccer, Race, and Suburban Space," in *Sporting Dystopias*, eds. Ralph C. Wilcox, David L. Andrews, Robert Pitter, and Richard L. Irwin, 206 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

¹¹ Franklin Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 246.

¹² *The Washington Post*, "Soccer may be kids' game but parents are big problem," May 20, 1980.

sports'. In fact, in the inner city of Washington DC, soccer was "rarely mentioned, much less played"¹³. Many of these Yuppies, however, did not actually play soccer themselves but put their children into the game. Youth soccer was such a successful status marker because, unlike widely affordable commodity goods such as refrigerators, soccer clinics and camps in the New York area cost up to \$220 a day¹⁴. Thus, youth soccer became a marker for Yuppies to distinguish themselves against lower income groups because, just like a German car, it was an affordable luxury to the middle class but too costly for the working class. Nevertheless, since choice of sports is an individual lifestyle decision, using soccer as a class based distinction obscured the income inequality that existed between Yuppies and the working class, thus lessened conflict.

Although this cultural cosmopolitanism seemed to reflect Reagan's focus on individuality, Historian David L. Andrews argues that "suburban lifestyle projects are less a search for true individualism, and more a stylized expression of class based cultural associations"¹⁵. Unlike in the seventies, where people would drop out of society and live by their individual rules, these Yuppies based their consumption and lifestyles on what other members of their class were doing rather than on true individual expression. *The New York Times* reported that during youth soccer games there was often "mass confusion over what was and was not taking place on the field" amongst parents, which demonstrated this desire¹⁶. Had they truly cared about individual expression, they would

¹³ *The Washington Post*, "City Youth Unstirred by Soccer," June 23 1979.

¹⁴ *The New York Times*, "In the Suburbs Soccer is Becoming No. 1 Sport," Jun 25, 1985.

¹⁵ David L. Andrews, "Contextualizing Suburban Soccer: Consumer Culture, Lifestyle Differentiation and Suburban America," *Sport in Society*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (1999): 45.

¹⁶ *New York Times*, "Soccer, Soccer Everywhere," Nov 9, 1982.

take interest in something they understood rather than just following what everyone else did.

Soccer and Yuppies' Views on Issues of Race

The efforts of Yuppies to form class solidarity also took on racial tones. Perhaps feeling aggravated that the government in the sixties and seventies seemingly favored the poor minorities while the white middle class suffered from high tax rates and inflation, many Yuppies held a moderate approach to race issues. This moderate approach contrasted greatly with President Lyndon Johnson's great society speech at Howard University, where he urged the United States to attack "these evils [racial inequality] through our poverty program, through our education program, through our medical care and our other health programs"¹⁷. While the new middle class opposed outwardly racist policies such as de jure segregation and denying suffrage to minorities, they were usually against forced integration such as busing¹⁸.

In the athletic sphere, these sentiments manifested themselves amongst the middle class in their move away from youth football to soccer. As a *US News and World Report* article claimed, some parents admitted that they wanted their children to participate in "a sport not as dominated by blacks as football and basketball"¹⁹. Rather than openly creating white only football leagues, which would be explicitly racist, a move towards soccer allowed these Yuppies to gently pursue racist goals as many blacks were prevented from joining these suburban clubs due to the high price. This strategy's success

¹⁷ Lyndon B. Johnson, "President Lyndon B. Johnson's Commencement Address at Howard University," Lyndon Johnson Library and Museum, <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/650604.asp> (accessed 11/20/2010).

¹⁸ Schulman, "The Seventies," 114

¹⁹ *US News and World Report*, Oct 17, 1977.

is evident in an article from the *St. Louis Post* that described a black soccer player, Paul Wright, as a “minority within a minority”²⁰.

Soccer and Yuppie’s Focus on Health

Another mechanism that Yuppies adopted for class-based distinctions was their manic focus on health and, as *Newsweek* mentioned, their bodies was their “most prized possession”²¹. This differentiation separated them from the lower class because, “exemption from manual labor is the most ancient privilege of the ‘mental worker’, from the village scribe to the Madison Avenue copy writer. He or she does not bend, lift, scrub, shovel, haul, or engage in other potentially damaging exertions for a living”²². This attention to the body lead to the abundance of private fitness clubs that opened during the eighties. Soccer also reflected this focus as it was a sport that allowed children to exercise without “being brutal about it”²³. This juxtaposes football, which was much more “knock em’ sock em” thus was seen as a lower class sport²⁴. In fact, one mother mentioned that football encouraged “kids to bang around on each other to win a place on the team, it just made me sick”²⁵.

Moreover, the Yuppies’ role as ‘mental workers’ suggested that their intellect was another point of contrast between their class and the masses. Soccer also appealed to this intellectual side of Yuppie culture. One parent from Germantown, a rich suburb in Memphis, mentioned that, unlike football or basketball, soccer does not have a plan so a

²⁰ *St. Louis Post*, “WU’s Wright not your typical soccer type,” Aug 29, 1989.

²¹ *Newsweek*, “The Year of the Yuppie,” Dec 31, 1984.

²² Barbara Ehrenreich, *Fear of Falling*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1989), 233

²³ *The Washington Post*, “Soccer Craze Move in From the Subrubs,” March 3, 1977.

²⁴ *The Washington Post*, “Soccer my be kids’ game by parents are the big problem,” May 20, 1980.

²⁵ *US News and World Report*, Oct. 17, 1977

player must have innate intelligence to succeed²⁶. This ‘intellectual’ lifestyle choice enabled the Yuppies to further distinguish themselves from the lower class.

Soccer and Yuppie Family Life

Another point of contrast for the Yuppies against the underclass was the focus on family. The eighties’ revival of family values came in response to the rise of gay rights and premarital sex of the sixties and seventies. As Reagan said, “the family today remains the fundamental unit of American life. But statistics show that it has lost ground, and I don't believe there's much doubt that the American family could be, and should be, much, much stronger”²⁷. Unlike the middle class, poor minorities often had broken families. This decline of family values amongst the poor is evident in Jeffrey Manor, a low-income neighborhood in Chicago, where, by 1980, one third of its children were raised by single mothers²⁸.

Youth soccer was another way to foster family values, as a middle class parent claimed, “It is a family affair here in Germantown. I think the people here are more family oriented”²⁹. Unlike the lower classes, there was always an availability of Yuppie parents who were willing to coach, chauffeur or keep score³⁰. Poor single mums, however, could ill afford to spend so much time on their kids’ leisure activities, especially since Reagan cut a lot of welfare spending, forcing them to take on more work. This sense of middle class moral superiority is reflected by a Yuppie who suggested that inner city parents might not have enough commitment for youth soccer and that “this is a

²⁶ Andrews, Pitter, Zwick and Ambrose, “*Soccer, Race, and Suburban Space*,” 212.

²⁷ Ronald Reagan, “Radio Address to the Nation on Family Values”, The American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=36826> (accessed 11/20/2010).

²⁸ Jason DeParle, *The American Dream*, (London: Penguin, 2004), 46.

²⁹ Andrews, Pitter, Zwick and Ambrose, “*Soccer, Race, and Suburban Space*,” 212.

³⁰ *New York Times*, “In the Suburbs Soccer is Becoming No. 1 Sport,” June 25, 1985.

well-to-do community, and the parents are very motivated to see their kids happy”³¹. The youth soccer team Westchester Winners, located in one of the wealthiest counties in New York, symbolized a Yuppie’s dedication to their child’s lives. In 1986, the team embarked on a 23-day trip in England and Italy, with 11 parents going on the trip. The fact that 11 parents could afford to take 23 days off work showed the elitist nature of suburban soccer, as the lower class could not financially afford such a commitment.

This focus on a stable family heavily affected child-rearing practices. Contrasting the unstructured lives of poor children, Yuppie parents often pushed their kids towards excellence by filling their schedules with piano lessons, private tutors, ballet and French classes. The Yuppies’ focus on their children’s excellence was due to the rising competition for getting into “good private colleges- and even to the first rate urban nursery schools”³². The manic obsession in helping their children achieve excellence is evident in a mother from Florida, who absurdly tried to hire a private trainer for her two year old so he could get into a soccer team³³. The importance placed on a child’s achievement was an extension of how many Yuppies could not replicate the lifestyle that their parents had. This fear of falling out of the middle class increased the desire for Yuppies to push their children into the best schools to prevent further downward mobility.

³¹ Andrews, Pitter, Zwick and Ambrose, “*Soccer, Race, and Suburban Space*,” 214.

³² Ehrenreich, “*Fear of Falling*,” 221.

³³ *St Petersburg Times*, “Youth Soccer is Alive, Kicking,” Sept 16, 1990.

Part 2: Women's Soccer and Feminism

Introduction

Aside from serving as a vehicle through which Yuppies could distinguish themselves from the underclass, soccer also became a mechanism for women and supporters of the feminist movement to demarcate themselves from conservative male dominated American society in the seventies and eighties. The development of women's soccer also accurately mirrored feminist developments and ran into much of the same problems, which feminism faced. Moreover, women's soccer was also able to mitigate some of the tensions and problems in society that arose due to feminist advances.

Political Climate of the 1970s and 1980s

In the 1970s, second wave feminism was in full swing and women were making many advances in society. The National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC), which counted amongst its ranks feminist leaders such as Gloria Steinem as well as Betty Freidan, financially backed female political candidates and helped women rise to mainstream political prominence³⁴. Shirley Chisholm, a member of the U.S House of Representative, and Ella Grasso, the Governor of Connecticut (known as, "the first lady Governor who was not a Governor's Lady") were evidence of women's political advances³⁵. The number of women entering the workforce also expanded; from 1972 to 1985 women's share of professional jobs increased from 44% to 49%³⁶. Moreover, women gained entry into traditionally male sectors such as law or finance (lawyers who

³⁴ Schulman, "*The Seventies*," 166.

³⁵ Schulman, "*The Seventies*," 166.

³⁶ George Guilder, "Women in the Workforce," *The Atlantic*, Sep, 1986.

were women had risen from 2% to 15% while jobs in banking and finance held by women had risen from 9% to 39%)³⁷. It was against this backdrop of feminist advances that women's soccer began to emerge.

The 'Battle of the Sexes' and Title IX of the 1972 Education Act laid the foundations for the proliferation of women's soccer. Title IX states that any program or organizations receiving federal funding was not allowed to discriminate between participants based on gender. This act essentially called on schools to provide equal funding for both men's and women's athletic programs. The 'Battle of the Sexes', on the other hand, was a tennis match that took place in 1973 between Bobby Riggs, a fifty five-year old former Wimbledon champion, and Billie Jean King, the number one women's player at the time. Riggs had often taunted that "women players were inferior, that women athletes did not deserve equal prize money, that even an old man could beat the best female player"³⁸. King, in response, accepted the challenge as she felt that she could show the "gains women can make in a male-dominated area and sports is a place where everybody can see those gains"³⁹. She easily dispensed of Riggs. This proved a monumental moment for women all around America. Feminist Susan Douglas recalled, "women like me screamed with delight in our living rooms, she not only vindicated female athletes and feminism but also inspired many of us to get in shape- not because it would make us beautiful but because it would make us strong and healthy"⁴⁰.

³⁷ George Guilder, "Women in the Workforce,"

³⁸ Schulman, *The Seventies*, 159.

³⁹ Schulman, *The Seventies*, 159.

⁴⁰ Schulman, *The Seventies*, 161.

Rise of Women's Soccer

There was a rapid explosion of interest in women's soccer following the 'Battle of the Sexes' and Title IX. A *Washington Times* article claimed that in 1976, women's soccer clubs in Washington were "happy to find women who were vaguely athletic -- anyone who knew the difference between a basketball and a soccer ball and who, given a season or two, could remember not to touch the ball with their hands".⁴¹ By 1981, however, soccer had become one of the most played and best organized sport for women in Washington. Lois Burke, a member of a women's soccer team and a mother of two, further added that when she was in high school, public perception of sports was not as progressive and "women who did sports were weird"⁴². This change in public perception on sports reflects a legitimization of women's right to participate in athletics⁴³.

Women's Soccer and Cultural Feminism

Aside from the increasing number of women entering the workplace and politics, the feminist movement also entailed a rise of cultural feminism. This strain of feminism focused on celebrating traditionally female traits rather than trying to change mainstream America and male opinion⁴⁴. Cultural feminism was in essence a reassertion of differences and rejecting male ideas in favor of a counterculture based on "communitarian values and an ethic of care"⁴⁵. Soccer became a medium through which women could pursue cultural feminism. In athletics, male culture meant being

⁴¹ *The Washington Post*, "Women's Soccer Scene," Oct 30, 1981.

⁴² *The Washington Post*, "Women's Soccer Scene," Oct 30, 1981.

⁴³ *The Washington Post*, "Women's Soccer Scene," Oct 30, 1981.

⁴⁴ Jessica E. Jay, "Women's Participation in Sports: Four Feminist Perspective," *Texas Journal of Women and Law*, Vol. 7 (1997): 32.

⁴⁵ Jessica E. Jay, "Women's Participation in Sports," 32.

competitive, aggressive and having a win at all cost mentality⁴⁶. Deborah T. Meem, a professor who also coached girl's soccer in the eighties, sheds light on this mentality when she lamented that fathers were often too harsh on their daughters. Meem mentioned an example where a girl was knocked down and started crying. Rather than comforting her, the father berated the girl for "letting that other girl know she hurt you" and ordered her to "Get back in there and take your punishment"⁴⁷. Women's soccer in the late seventies and eighties, however, vehemently moved away from this type of thinking. Myra Nelson, a 53-year-old biological laboratory technician for the department of defense who also coached women's soccer, alluded to this rejection of male values when she explained that she has to "sweetly cajole her players because it's important not to make them feel bad."⁴⁸

In fact, soccer became a tool to teach girls these feminine values. Meem explains this use of soccer in her article *Feminism in Action: Teaching our Daughters* and proclaimed that "like Virginia Woolf, I too launch a "whiff of shot" in the cause of feminism: I coach girl's soccer"⁴⁹. In order to repudiate this masculine win-at-all cost mentality, Meem stressed "process (skills, teamwork, and group consciousness) over product (winning)"⁵⁰. To produce these values on the pitch, Meem instructed her team that "unless the field is truly open ahead (and this means *wide* open), normal procedure is to pass rather than dribble"⁵¹. In addition, when a goal is scored, Meem gave credit to all

⁴⁶ Jessica E. Jay, "Women's Participation in Sports," 32.

⁴⁷ Deborah T. Meem, "Feminism in Action: Teaching our Daughters", *Feminist Teacher*, Vol. 6, no. 1 (1991): 21.

⁴⁸ *The New York Times*, "Whats a mother to do? Go out and play soccer," June 7, 1985.

⁴⁹ Meem, "Feminism in Action," 21.

⁵⁰ Meem, "Feminism in Action," 23.

⁵¹ Meem, "Feminism in Action," 23.

the girls involved in the scoring of a goal rather than just the scorer. Encouraging passing and giving credit to every girl involved with a goal takes away the more masculine sense of individualism. Through using soccer as a method to teach girls/women to celebrate female values, women were able to delineate themselves from men.

Developing out of cultural feminism was the proliferation of sisterhood support. As journalist Gloria Steinem said, “After years of trying to explain things to men and to change the outside world, movement experiences at last gave birth to sisterhood”⁵². She then added, “women understand, we may share experiences that mean nothing to men, but women *understand*”⁵³. In society, sisterhood manifested in support institutions run by women for women such as rape clinics and credit unions. Soccer actually became a mechanism to cultivate sisterhood and this was achieved by making the position that each woman plays interchangeable. This interchangeability meant “all players had the opportunity to play both offense and defense every game”⁵⁴. Meem explained that by experiencing a number of positions, women would understand what each position required and the difficulty that their teammate faced in different parts of the field. With this understanding, women would be able to cover for each other when one teammate appeared to be tired or out of position. Similarly, each woman that is placed in a different position in society (be it economic, ethnic or social group) will face a different set of difficulties. Cultivating a culture of understanding and interdependence between women enabled ‘sisters’ to ‘cover’ for each other when others are in a tough situation in real life. Moreover, soccer also brought women from different walks of life together, which helps

⁵² Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 171.

⁵³ Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 171.

⁵⁴ Meem, “*Feminism in Action*,” 24.

widen the member of their sisterhood network, as Doris Burke, a mother of two, explained, “one of the things I like about the team is that you get to be friends with people whose lifestyles aren't exactly like yours”⁵⁵.

Women’s Soccer and Family Life

While the feminist movement helped many women break through the glass ceiling put in place by a male dominated society, it unfortunately also contributed to the breaking apart of families. The ostensibly more purposeful life lead by women entering the workforce or politics made housewives question their role as homemakers. This self doubt led to high divorce rates as many felt constrained by their mundane lifestyles (from the 1970s to the 1980s, the divorce rate doubled reaching more than one million divorces annually)⁵⁶. Joanna Kramer, from the movie *Kramer v. Kramer*, exhibits this yearning for a more fulfilling life as she was a housewife who left her husband and child because she wanted to ‘find herself’ and pursue a career.

Soccer, however, gave housewives an opportunity to escape their humdrum way of living. One housewife, who also played on a women’s team, proclaimed "all day I do things for others. This [soccer] is something I do for *me*"⁵⁷. Mary Johnson, a mother of five from Long Island, also reflected this sentiment as she decided to start playing because she wanted to “do more than just watch her son play soccer”⁵⁸. Other mothers from Long Island felt the same way and eventually formed a team called North Babylon

⁵⁵ *The Washington Post*, “Women Playing the Field,” April 11, 1980.

⁵⁶ Megan Williamson, “The Effect of the Structural Changes that Occurred Within the Family in the United States During the 1960's and 1970's,” Lewis and Clark University, <http://legacy.lclark.edu/~soan314/family-eighties.html> (accessed Mar 20, 2011).

⁵⁷ *The Washington Post*, “Women playing the field,” April 11, 1980.

⁵⁸ *New York Times*, “More women playing organized soccer,” May 19, 1982.

Moms⁵⁹. Participating in soccer also gave housewives a sense of superiority over those who do not, making their life seem more purposeful in comparison. Housewife Yvette Liedloff alluded to this effect of soccer when she proudly proclaimed, “when I take my kids to their practices, I see some moms just reading a book or they just drop them off for a couple of hours. I get out and help them with practice!”⁶⁰ Rather than breaking apart their family to ‘find themselves’, soccer allowed housewives to find a purpose in life without overt confrontation or disruption to the family.

Male and Conservative Backlash and Women’s Soccer

One problem that the feminist movement encountered was the conservative masculine backlash against the gains women were making in society. This backlash was evident in the failure of feminism’s most ambitious project, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA was a legislation, which wrote that “equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex” and that “the Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article”⁶¹. Unsurprisingly, the ERA was not ratified in the Sunbelt states with Southerners believing that the amendment was created by “distant, out of touch elites”⁶². Senator Randolph Jennings went as far as calling women libbers “braless bobbleheads”⁶³. Backlash against the increase in women participating in athletics was also rampant. When the University of Oklahoma announced that they would cancel their women’s basketball program, Oklahoma governor Henry Bellman said: “it doesn’t bother

⁵⁹ *New York Times*, “More women playing organized soccer,” May 19, 1982.

⁶⁰ *The Orange County Register*, “Women’s Soccer League puts mum’s in kid’s show,” Dec 29, 1988.

⁶¹ Roberta W. Francis, “The History Behind the Equal Rights Amendment,” ERA Taskforce, <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm> (accessed Feb 16, 2011).

⁶² Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 170.

⁶³ Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 170.

me. They'll still have intramural basketball won't they? We have never had total equality in women's athletics, and I don't know that we ever will have. They don't have the same opportunity now. There is no women's baseball or woman's wrestling. I guess there is women's mud wrestling"⁶⁴. From Bellman's comment, it is obvious that conservative masculine America treated women's athletics as a joke.

Women who decided to adopt soccer faced a similar backlash and often complain that male referees would give them the "ah, they're only women' attitude"⁶⁵. Many women also lamented that they had difficulty booking pitches because males would get priority. Moreover, men also often displayed disbelief and suspicion when women exhibited athletic prowess. The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* chronicled one incident where two fathers demanded that Natasha Dennis, a ten-year-old soccer player, pull down her pants for a "halftime gender check to prove she isn't a boy" because she was too good⁶⁶. Even when men participate in coed teams, there was still an inherent tint of sexism. Women were often placed on the wing or half back, positions that do not generally get to dictate play. Men, however, typically got to play more central roles and dominate the flow of the game. Moreover, a study conducted by sociologists Jacques M. Henry and Howard P. Comeaux revealed that in co-ed soccer, the biggest proportion of passes made in a match is between men while passes from men to women made up for the smallest (42% and 8% respectively)⁶⁷.

⁶⁴ *The New York Times*, "Oklahoma Has Done it Yet again," April 5, 1990.

⁶⁵ *The Washington Post*, "Women's Soccer Scores Fast," Nov 8, 1981.

⁶⁶ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 19, 1990.

⁶⁷ Jacques M. Henry and Howard P. Comeaux, "Gender Egalitarianism in Coed Sport: A Case Study of American Soccer," *International Review for Sociology of Sports*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1999): 282.

Women's Soccer and Male Pro-Feminists

Contrasting the conservative backlash against women's advancement in traditional male spheres was the 'new age males' support for female equality. These 'new age males' were men who increasingly moved away from the masculine ideals embodied by John Wayne towards a more sensitive personality. This shifting role of men can also be seen in the movie *Kramer v. Kramer*, where the protagonist Ted Kramer went from being a successful workaholic who barely knew his son to someone who cooks dinner for his child and puts him to bed every night. A real life example of such men is actor Alan Alda, described as 'America's Sweetheart'. He was a member of the National Commission for the Observance of International Women's Year and explained that he finds "pleasure in working with women, working for women's rights, talking with women, associating with them and becoming friends"⁶⁸. In fact, the seventies and eighties saw a proliferation of pro-feminist organizations such as the Men Allied Nationally for the Equal Rights Amendment, the California Anti-Sexist Men's Political Caucus and the National Organization for Men against Sexism.

These pro-feminist sentiments also manifested in women's soccer as these 'new age men' supported this sport to distinguish themselves against the conservatives. The memoir of Suhail Hanna, a professor at Geneva College who also coached their women's soccer team during the eighties, titled *Beyond Winning* illuminated this function of women's soccer. Hanna explained that he wanted his soccer legacy to be tied to his support for women's equality:

⁶⁸ Schulman, "*The Seventies*," 178.

“I’d love to be perceived not as an intruder in the women’s movement but as a coach who cherishes equity, one who’d argue in behalf of Title IX from the equity perspectives shared by parents of daughters who play sports, by coaches of women’s programs, and by sensitive and ethically minded citizens who had no vested interest, save a sense of fairness and an awareness of all the benefits that competitive sports could bring to girls and women in such areas as exercise, teamwork, discipline, leadership, enjoyment, friendship and responsibility”⁶⁹

Being remembered as someone who “cherishes equity” clearly contrasts the views of conservatives such as activist Phyllis Schlafly, who suggested, “American women never had it so good. Why should we lower ourselves to equal”⁷⁰. Therefore, by supporting women’s right to play soccer and equality in the athletic sphere, Hanna was able to separate him from the conservatives and present himself as a progressive liberal.

Another famous defender of women’s soccer is Federal Judge Richard P. Matsch. He attended the University of Michigan Ann Arbor, the birthplace of the Port Huron Statement. While Matsch attended the university before the Port Huron Statement was written, it would not be surprising that he was exposed to similar ideas and culture, which later spawned the New Left. Matsch showed his belief in liberalism and equality when he revealed that his hero is Atticus Finch, a white lawyer from the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* who had to defend a black man from rape charges and did so with valor despite losing the case. Matsch describes Finch as “the opponent of oppression, the paradigm of propriety, the dean of decent citizens and the core of his community”⁷¹.

⁶⁹ Suhail Hanna, *Beyond Winning: Memoir of a Women’s Soccer Coach*, (Niwot: University of Colorado Press, 1996), 30.

⁷⁰ Nancy Maclean, *The American Women’s Movement, 1945-2000* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2009), 116.

⁷¹ Patrick E. Cole, “Don’t Mess with Richard Matsch,” *Time*, May 26, 1997.

Matsch ruled on the first court case dealing with women's right to play soccer titled *Hoover v. Meiklejohn*. In the case, Matsch overruled the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) regulation allowing only boys to play soccer. Donna Hoover was a sixteen-year-old student in Colorado, who played on the boy's junior varsity team because there was no girl's team. The principle of her high school, however, requested that she be taken off the team because her presence violated the CHSAA's regulations. CHSAA's rationale for denying girls the chance at soccer was that it was a contact sport, thus girls would have been in danger if they played with boys. In his argument against CHSAA's ruling, Matsch pointed out that the physical discrepancy within a gender is greater than that between genders and by that logic, smaller boys should be barred from contact sports too. Judge Matsch also felt that sports is a fabric of American society and prohibiting women to participate is like prohibiting them from being a part of the government⁷². This case was significant because the rise of women in the workplace and government, which were traditionally male spheres, showed that the men's domination of society was falling. As the male backlash against women's soccer suggested, contact sports were one of the last strongholds of male power and authority over women. Unsurprisingly, many men did not want females infringing on this space. Matsch ruling in favor of Hoover, however, provided a precedent for other judges to argue the case for female participation in sports such as football and wrestling. By being on the side of women's soccer and suggesting that "any notion that young women are so inherently weak, delicate or physically inadequate that the state must protect them from the folly of participation in vigorous athletics is a cultural anachronism unrelated to

⁷² Sarah K. Fields, "Hoover v. Meiklejohn: The Equal Protection Clause, Girls, and Soccer," *Journal of Sport History* (2003): 315.

reality”, Matsch, much like Hanna, was able to demarcate himself from the conservatives⁷³. In both Matsch and Hanna’s case, soccer provided a less politicized medium for championing their support for women’s equality, especially amidst the conservatism, which began with the tax revolts in the late seventies (they certainly were less disruptive to society than the feminist marches and anti-ERA rallies that were taking place). The depoliticized nature of soccer is reflected by the fact that unlike the anti-ERA rallies, which took place following the federal government’s ratification of the ERA, there was little to no protest against Matsch’s ruling.

Feminism and Class Divisions

One failure of the feminist movement was its inability to connect women from different classes in society. While women were increasingly entering ‘respectable’ positions in the workforce, these gains were mainly experienced by women from wealthy backgrounds. For example, a 1976 study revealed that women entering medical school usually grew up in the same class as men who were entering. Ehrenreich further illuminates that “the average working woman, who is not a professional and not likely to be college-educated, is still pretty much where she always was: waiting on tables, emptying wastebaskets, or pounding a keyboard for \$5 or \$6 an hour. If the recent opening up of the professions has been feminism’s greatest victory, it is a victory whose sweetness the majority of American women will never taste”⁷⁴.

Soccer similarly exhibited this class divide. While soccer did allow women to “be friends with people whose lifestyles weren’t exactly yours”, these were mainly women

⁷³ Sarah K. Fields, “*Hoover v. Meiklejohn*,” 315.

⁷⁴ Ehrenreich, “*Fear of Falling*,” 217.

from their own income group⁷⁵. Women's leagues were often made up of doctors, lawyers, other professionals and housewives, all solidly middle class professions (if a woman can afford to be a housewife, her husband must be fairly well off). Occupations such as waitresses or cleaners, however, were rarely, if ever, mentioned to be a part of such leagues. In addition, these teams often go on foreign tours, further pricing out poorer potential participants. This class divide contradicts the feminist purpose of creating sisterhood through the understanding women have of one another as it seems monetary barriers could not be broken.

Women's World Cup 1999

While women's and girl's soccer increasingly became a fabric of American society from the 1970s to the 1990s and reflected much of the political changes taking place, there was still very little mainstream media coverage of this sport. Indeed, there was very little coverage of women's sports in general. In 1991, *Sports Illustrated*, America's most popular sports magazine, dedicated approximately 91 percent of their page space to male athletics. In 1999, *Business Wire* reported, "although 51% of women participate in sports, less than 10 percent of the media covers women's sports"⁷⁶.

Therefore, mainstream media largely continued to ignore women's rights to athletics despite the monumental changes that Title IX and 'the Battle of the Sexes' brought about. How then, do we explain the Women's World Cup of 1999, where the finals between the United States and China became (and still is) the most watched soccer match ever (40 million viewers) in the United States? This viewership number was higher than both the

⁷⁵ *The Washington Post*, "Women Playing the Field," April 11, 1980.

⁷⁶ Helene A. Shugart, "She shoots she scores," "Mediated Constructions of Contemporary Female Athletes in Coverage of the 1999 US Women's Soccer Team," *Western Journal of Communication*, Vol. 67, no. 1 (2003): 2.

NBA and NHL finals, “shattering any lingering belief that no one would pay to watch women play soccer”⁷⁷.

The immense support that the U.S. Women’s World Cup team received is indeed a curiosity as traditionally, mainstream Americans cared very little about soccer.

Anthropologist Koen Stroeken argued in his article *Why the World Loves Watching Football (and the Americans don’t)* that American’s normal apathy towards soccer was due to the superior position of power that the United States held over the rest of the world. Soccer, however, possessed a “cultural logic of uncertainty, which guarantees millions of spectators the pleasure of seeing the established hierarchy of nations in world politics subverted by an alternative one”⁷⁸. While the United States held hegemonic political status in the world, their soccer team was nowhere near the world’s best. This position meant that the U.S. have little to gain from paying attention to soccer because the chance of them winning an important international competition is rare and, if anything, being beaten by politically weaker nations could lead to the questioning of America’s political superiority. In the sports that generally garners the American public’s attention, such as basketball, the United States have in its’ national team the top practitioners in the world thus usually end up winning large international contests and, in the process, reaffirm the United States’ overall exceptionalism.

The reason for the immense support the U.S. Women’s Team received was analogous to why the American public paid so much attention to basketball. That is,

⁷⁷ Duke University, “1999 Women’s World Cup,” Duke University, <http://sites.duke.edu/wcwp/research-projects/womens-soccer-in-the-u-s/1999-womens-world-cup/> (accessed March 15, 2011).

⁷⁸ Koen Stroeken “Why the world loves watching football (and the Americans don’t), *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (2002): 10.

mainstream America started caring about the women's world cup as it became obvious that United States had a high chance of winning the tournament. This motivation was apparent in the increasing T.V ratings as the tournament progressed. The support that mainstream America offered to the women's soccer team became a mechanism for Americans to celebrate their superiority and progressiveness over the rest of the world, especially in the arena of women's rights. Following their victory, the U.S. Women's National Team was lauded as symbols of women advancement in society. Patricia Schroeder, the first woman from Colorado to be elected into Congress, exclaimed in an article titled *Soccer Team Shatters Glass Ceiling*, that "exploding in front of our eyes was an incoming missile called the U.S. women's soccer team, which blast through some of the final barriers against women assuming more leadership roles"⁷⁹. Men who were able to witness the match also displayed a lot of pride. Writer Steve Otto, in his article *We've Come a Long Way, Baby*, recalled his experience watching the Women's World Cup final: "we weren't watching baseball, and we certainly weren't watching the Greater Milwaukee Open golf tournament. We were watching Team USA, the American women's soccer team, going against China for the Women's World Cup. Yup, four guys watching a soccer game - a women's soccer game - and loving every minute of it"⁸⁰. Otto's comments suggest pride in their progressiveness, which manifested in them not watching the sports that men were supposed to watch, such as baseball or golf. Instead, they were supporting women's role in society by watching the United States win and "loving every minute of it". In fact, the coverage provided by the mainstream media, which usually covered only male sports, was "phenomenal, possibly more intense than

⁷⁹ Patricia Schroeder, "Soccer Team Shatters Glass Ceiling," *Los Angeles Times*, July 18, 1999.

⁸⁰ Steve Otto, "We've Come a long way, Baby," *Tampa Tribune*, July 13, 1999.

any coverage of a men's championship in any sport"⁸¹. Through celebrating women's soccer, citizens of the United States were able to distinguish themselves from the rest of the world and reaffirm their exceptionalism.

Part 3: Soccer and Minorities

Section Introduction

Beyond serving as a tool for Yuppies and women to contrast themselves from different groups in society, soccer also became a vehicle for minorities to express their national pride as well as their grievances against America. Moreover, soccer helped solve some of the problems minorities were facing in the seventies and eighties such as the increasing representation of ethnics in juvenile arrests.

Before the radicalization of U.S. society in the sixties, American immigrants tended to focus on assimilation and shedding their old roots. This desire to assimilate was in part due to the political climate of the time, as the Cold War was in full swing and any display of disloyalty to America held a communist tinge. The rise of Senator Joe McCarthy symbolized the intense fear of communism and anything 'foreign'. An immigrant's focus on assimilation was evident in the 'Letters from America' campaign that took place in the fifties, where immigrants would write home proclaiming how great American values were. In essence, American society before the sixties was a 'melting pot' where different ethnicities would be thrown into a stew and everyone would end up with similar values.

⁸¹ Helene A. Shugart, "*She shoots she scores*," 7.

This desire to assimilate also affected the choice of sports that the immigrants picked up. Soccer, due of its foreign connotations, was largely rejected by immigrants, as sociologists Markovits and Hellermen argued, “if one liked soccer, one was viewed as at least resisting- if not outright rejecting- integration⁸²”. They further added that soccer lovers were often “ignored (even vilified in certain cases) by the prevailing zeitgeist for failing to meet the cultural and social requisites of the melting pot”⁸³. Recent immigrants rapidly adopted sports such as baseball and football as they reflected American values due of their highly statistical nature, which runs parallel to a “society that anchors much of its legitimacy in meritocracy and achievement rather than entitlement”. Since numbers/statistics holds relatively similar meaning to most cultures, this created a sense of “universalism” and clarity that immigrants can understand and allowed them to feel that they were a part of the American culture⁸⁴.

Political Climate of the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties

By the sixties and seventies, however, minorities became increasingly inward looking and rejected assimilation into mainstream America. Instead, they celebrated their native culture and national pride. An example of this trend is the Chicano manifesto, where author Armando Rendon, “renounced the success he had acquired in the white man’s world and denounced the older generation- the Mexican American businessmen, politicians and civic leaders who disclaimed their heritage”⁸⁵. In the eighties, this look inwards continued, as there was a new influx of immigrants who in part arrived because

⁸² Andrei S. Markovits and Steven L. Hellerman, *Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 52.

⁸³ Markovits and Hellerman, “*Offside*,” 52.

⁸⁴ Markovits and Hellerman, “*Offside*,” 50.

⁸⁵ Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 64.

of Reagan's imperialistic overseas interventions. Reagan's actions in Latin America often took on violent means, as the Contras, counterinsurgents the United States trained and funded to fight the Marxist Sandinistas, would "arrive at an undefended village, assemble all the residents in the town square and then proceed to kill- in full view of the others-all persons suspected of working for the Sandinista party"⁸⁶. These belligerent actions against the immigrants' home country would certainly have further antagonized them and reduced their desire for assimilation. Therefore, these immigrants would often "seek safety in numbers" within their own ethnicities⁸⁷. The compartmentalized nature of U.S. society shattered the American ideal of being a 'melting pot', creating a new identity resembling a "rainbow"⁸⁸.

Soccer and National Pride

These immigrants often turned to soccer as an outlet for their national pride of their home country. This purpose of soccer is clear whenever the United States national team plays matches at home. In fact, the United States may be the only country in the world who has more opponents than supporters in their own stands. *Associated Press* sports writer Brian Trusdell, in his article *U.S. Soccer Teams Have that Far Away Feeling at Home*, explained that "the drawbacks to being a nation of immigrants without a soccer tradition is that U.S. squads frequently play before crowds largely rooting for the visiting foreign teams"⁸⁹.

⁸⁶ Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop*, (New York: Owl Books, 2006), 115.

⁸⁷ Kurt Anderson, "Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island," *Time*, June 13, 1983.

⁸⁸ Anderson, "Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island,"

⁸⁹ Brian Trusdell, "U.S Soccer Team have that Far Away Feeling at Home," *The Associated Press*, July 6, 1989.

The match played between the United States and Costa Rica in St. Louis on July 5 1989 illuminated the role of soccer as a vehicle for national pride. The U.S. soccer federation picked St. Louis as a venue for the match rather than cities such as Miami and Los Angeles, which had better soccer facilities and a larger football fandom, because of the large Hispanic communities who lived there⁹⁰. Despite St. Louis being a supposed “safe haven for Americans”, Costa Rican-Americans completely drowned out the United State’s supporters. The *St. Louis Post*, painted a picture of the scene:

They [Costa Rican-Americans] paraded around the grounds, waving flags and banners and making all kinds of noise with drums and horns and tambourines. It was like a mini-carnival in Rio de Janeiro. When the match started, they yelled and whistled and stomped their feet and waved their flags and chanted in unison for their team. It was the biggest display of solidarity this side of Poland”⁹¹

To describe the scene as “the biggest display of solidarity this side of Poland”, albeit exaggerated, is a testament to how effective soccer is as an outlet of national pride. In fact, many Costa Rican Americans made their way to St. Louis from Chicago, Texas and Iowa to cheer for their home country, showing the ability of soccer to create unity amongst certain ethnic groups and bringing together their compatriots from all across the country⁹². While the crowd was blatantly against the United States, there were no instances of violence. Nevertheless, the hostility towards the immigrants’ adopted nation on display was a far cry from the 1950s ‘Letters from America’ campaign. Since this

⁹⁰ *St. Louis Post*, “Enthusiasm Costa Rican Fans Show Show U.S What World Cup Soccer is All About,” May. 2, 1989.

⁹¹ *St. Louis Post*, “Cup Cheers Foreign to U.S.,” Nov 5, 1989. Poland was going a revolution to overthrow the communist government.

⁹² *St. Louis Post*, “Enthusiasm Costa Rican Fans Show Show U.S What World Cup Soccer is All About,” May. 2, 1989.

hostility took place within the context of a soccer game, however, it was able to blur the political connotations of anti-American displays, as it would appear to observers that they were only cheering for their home country to win, thus avoid conflict.

Soccer as a Space for the Recreation of Home Comforts

Resulting from this celebration of native national pride was the desire to recreate the comforts of home as well as the need for a space to practice each ethnicity's own culture. In the late 1960s, this desire took on radical elements. For example, in November 1969, 78 Native Americans seized the Alcatraz Island off San Francisco. These Native Americans explained that they reclaimed Alcatraz because they felt "that Indian people need a Cultural Center of their own"⁹³. Moreover, they were "setting up classes and trying to instill the old Indian ways into our young"⁹⁴.

Soccer, however, provided an alternate space for ethnic minorities to recreate comforts of home and kinship as well as celebrating their culture. Jim Satterly, writer for the *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, described the scene of a typical game between Mexican soccer clubs in Atlanta:

Behind the crowded bleacher, little black-haired boys chased a soccer ball that nearly came up to their knees. Nearby, parched and sweaty, players bought Coca-Colas, Sprites and native Jumex juices- pineapple-papaya nectar is a favorite- from two ice-filled barrels at a makeshift concession stand. A large blue and white striped umbrella shaded a woman who sold tacos and tortas to hungry spectators⁹⁵

⁹³ Alan J. Singer, "Native Americans Reclaim Alcatraz Island," University of Hofstra, http://people.hofstra.edu/alan_j_singer/ (accessed March 20, 2011).

⁹⁴ Alan J. Singer, "Native Americans Reclaim Alcatraz Island," University of Hofstra, http://people.hofstra.edu/alan_j_singer/ (accessed March 20, 2011).

⁹⁵ *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, "A Goal of Unity: Cultural Difference Fades as Atlanta's Ethnic Communities Share Soccer Field," June 10, 1992.

From the above description, one could be excused in thinking that this match was taking place in Mexico City and not the United States. As Satterly said, “on this pitch of red American soil in the deep South, thousands of metro Atlanta’s 100,000 Mexicans have carved out a piece of their homeland”⁹⁶. For new immigrants, leaving home to a foreign land (sometimes unwillingly, as with some of the refugees that came over due to Reagan’s foreign policy) must be difficult. The creation of a space that resembles home would undoubtedly help them settle. Moreover, using soccer as a vehicle for creating an ethnic community where native culture is celebrated was far less confrontational than the radical seventies movements such as the Native Americans’ taking of Alcatraz.

However, it was not just the Central or South Americans who used soccer as a space to celebrate their cultural identity. Ethnic minorities from the ‘Old World’ also used soccer in a similar manner. It is sometimes easy to forget that many of the immigrants from the old world, such as the English, Irish, Germans or Italians also have their own distinctive cultures different to that of mainstream America. Indeed, literature written on the topic of minorities reasserting their differences to mainstream America are often focused on immigrants from the new world. Reporter Clay Evans depicted a typical match day at the British and Dominion Social Club:

Their t-shirts depicted British bulldogs, the Union Jack, the St. Andrew’s Flag of Scotland and the Irish tricolor. The beer flowed freely, and the sons and daughters of the United Kingdom who gathered at the British and Dominion Social club felt no guilt about calling in sick.

⁹⁶ *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, “A Goal of Unity: Cultural Difference Fades as Atlanta’s Ethnic Communities Share Soccer Field,” June 10, 1992.

While such scenes are a familiar sight ‘across the pond’, this was a weekday at a local pub in Orange County. As Evans explained, these Brits “share two common languages: their native tongues and soccer”⁹⁷. Through soccer, immigrants from the old world also get to celebrate their own identities and allowed Americans to remember that even within the typical white American identity, there were still many differing cultures that added to the ‘patchwork’ that makes up America.

Minorities’ Increasing Self-Reliance and Soccer

As an extension of the minorities’ inward-looking nature, many immigrants also started relying on their compatriots to help them advance in society. This change resulted in different minorities forming their own alternative institutions rather than waiting on mainstream Americans to aid them. The Mexican community is a prime example of this trend as they started forming mutualistas (cooperative association) in addition to death benefit plans and cooperative grocery stores⁹⁸. Soccer leagues also became an arena where different ethnic groups looked out for their own and helped their compatriots. Gabriel Escobar, a writer for the *The Washington Post*, recorded that in Mexican soccer leagues, “during halftime or even during a lull in the games, the men share information on who is hiring day laborers to put up plasterboard, break concrete or do landscaping”⁹⁹. In the era of conservatism that was the eighties, U.S. government and society would be slow in helping these immigrants adapt to life in America and finding employment. Such delays would undoubtedly cause discontent amongst these immigrants. Soccer’s role in helping immigrants settle into the U.S. would, however, mitigate this discontent.

⁹⁷ *The Orange County Register*, “Cheering for the old team,” June 12, 1990.

⁹⁸ Schulman, “*The Seventies*,” 65.

⁹⁹ *The Washington Post*, “Soccer’s Spirit Finds a Place in the New Home,” Aug 30, 1993.

Soccer Soothing Tensions between Minorities

The compartmentalized nature of ethnic groups and a reassertion of differences also led to friction in society as different groups blamed each other for their economic difficulty. Frank Haley, an African American Laundromat owner, complained, “I see these Spanish coming in and buying businesses. They must be getting the money from somewhere”. Mary Henry, a black activist, further added, “We all looked up one day and everybody pumping gas seemed to be Asian.”¹⁰⁰ The LA riot of 1992, which is considered one of the most violent riots in American history, signified this tension. While the riot was started because Rodney King, an African American, was captured on video being heavily beaten by white police officers without showing any aggression himself, other ethnicities such as the Latinos joined in. Rioters used it as an opportunity to take out their economic grievances on immigrants who they feel has taken their livelihoods. In fact, most attacks that took place were on Asians. Interestingly, the arrest statistics showed that more Latinos were arrested than Blacks¹⁰¹.

Soccer, however, provided a space where cultural understanding was developed and differences were celebrated rather than being a point of friction. A *Washington Post* article titled *A Play for Diversity: Minority Youngsters Find Common Ground on Local Soccer Teams* chronicled a children team where two out of three children were minorities and half the team was made up of Latino and Asian children. One Guatemalan member of team explained, “I’ve learned a lot about other people’s cultures and I told them about

¹⁰⁰ Anderson, “*Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island*,”

¹⁰¹ Josh Sides, *LA City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 203.

Guatemala- how over there, the clothing has lot of colors put together”¹⁰². Another player added that he enjoyed talking to Chinese teammates “who told him about great Chinese warriors”¹⁰³. As people gain a greater understanding of each other’s culture, the ugly scenes of the LA riots could be avoided. Another example is found in Atlanta, where a Mexican team included two Italians and was coached by a Guatemalan. At the last match of the season, “an Italian goalkeeper and a Mexican defender shook hands. Ciao, said the keeper, to which the defender responded, Adios”¹⁰⁴. Through this Atlanta team, we can also see that soccer bridged not only immigrants from ‘poorer’ Latin American or Asian countries but also with ethnic Europeans. Therefore, soccer became a medium for different ethnicities to share their cultures and foster understanding.

Aside from anger arising between ethnic groups that blamed each other for their economic problems, there was also a “nurturing old prejudices”, which further added to the tension in society¹⁰⁵. For example, Arturo Price, a Columbian immigrant, sneered that “we have nothing to do with Mexicans here, our culture is different, our Spanish more pure”¹⁰⁶. Soccer, however, served as a pacifying force for these ethnic tensions as, Marcos Garcia, an El Salvadorian immigrant, explained: “it doesn’t matter what nationality, even if it doesn’t speak the language, they speak the language of the ball to

¹⁰² *The Washington Post*, “A Play for Diversity, Minority Youngsters Find Common Ground in Local Soccer Team,” May 6, 1993.

¹⁰³ *The Washington Post*, “A Play for Diversity, Minority Youngsters Find Common Ground in Local Soccer Team,” May 6, 1993.

¹⁰⁴ *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, “Soccer Diplomacy Brings Together Atlanta’s Ethnic Communities: Cultures are Celebrated Along with Native Sports,” 10 June, 1992.

¹⁰⁵ Anderson, “*Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island*,”

¹⁰⁶ Anderson, “*Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island*,”

play soccer”¹⁰⁷. The relationship between the New York Croatia team and the New York Albanians team, two countries who are historic Balkan enemies, illustrates this pacifying effect of soccer. Before the kickoff in a match between these two teams, the entire New York Croatia team would scream “For the Homeland!”¹⁰⁸ That rallying call, however, is the closest the match gets to evoking racial hatred. The president of the New York Albanians, Martin Shkreli, explained “we enjoy beating a team like New York Croatia, not because of old political rivalries, but because it’s a good team. In fact, we’re good friends and usually roast a lamb when we host each other”¹⁰⁹. This jovial relationship between the two ethnic teams was a far cry from the violent atmosphere, which plagued the Balkans in the nineties. Thus, soccer also helps break down barriers between ethnicities separated by hundreds of years of conflict.

Minorities’ Juvenile Delinquency Problem and Soccer

Another problem that manifested within minority communities in the eighties was their high number of juvenile offenders. Throughout this decade, the number of Hispanic, Asian American and Native Americans adolescents that were being incarcerated increased dramatically. In fact, minorities made up for 93% of the increase in juvenile incarceration¹¹⁰. This trend is not surprising considering that minorities tended to be in the underclass thus both parents would have to work. The time spent away from home meant children were often left alone without supervision as childcare was expensive.

Luisa Hall, an immigrant from Peru who teaches English to new immigrants, explained

¹⁰⁷ Joel Cohen, “For the Love of the Game: Latino Soccer Leagues in Somerville, Massachusetts,” (PHD diss., Tufts University 2003), 35.

¹⁰⁸ *The New York Times*, “In New York, Balkan Rivalries are Fought on a Soccer Field,” Aug 11, 1991.

¹⁰⁹ *The New York Times*, “In New York, Balkan Rivalries are Fought on a Soccer Field,” Aug 11, 1991.

¹¹⁰ U.S Congress, Subcommittee of Juvenile Justice, *Minority Overrepresentation in the Juvenile Justice System* (Washington, D.C: U.S Government Printing Office, June 25, 1991), 2.

that Latino youths were often bored and does not know what to do on weekends because of the language barrier as well as their parents being away. These children often end up joining gangs¹¹¹. Soccer, however, became a healthy activity that occupied these 'latchkey kids', as Hall added, "If they are busy doing something like soccer, they will have less temptation"¹¹².

Soccer as a Medium for Marginalized Minorities to Release their Anger

Lastly, one of the most important roles that soccer played in American society was to allow marginalized minorities to express their anger. This purpose of soccer was evident in a 1998 match between the United States and Mexico, where tensions spilled over into violence (Mexico won the match 1-0). *The Los Angeles Times* chronicled the scene:

Raining disrespect. Raining anger. Raining what could easily be interpreted as hatred. From out of the stands soared plastic bottles filled with water, crashing on the U.S. players' heads, splashing and bouncing at their feet. What followed was an avalanche of water and beer-filled cups, a lemon, a giant empty box, more water, more bottles. The garbage covered the U.S. team like an ugly blanket. It was accompanied by a chorus of words screamed in Spanish. It was enough to make a man want to scream back. God bless America. Land where American soccer players, playing a game for their country in their country, are treated like the enemy¹¹³.

¹¹¹ *The Washington Post*, "A Play for Diversity, Minority Youngsters Find Common Ground in Local Soccer Team," May 6, 1993.

¹¹² *The Washington Post*, "A Play for Diversity, Minority Youngsters Find Common Ground in Local Soccer Team," May 6, 1993.

¹¹³ Bill Plaschke, "Star Spangled Banter: U.S Based Players Should not be Pelted with Debris by U.S based fans," *L.A Times*, Feb 17, 1998 cited in Paola Rodriguez, "A Pure Space to be Mexican: Ethnic Mexicans and the U.S-Mexico Soccer Rivalry, 1990-2002," (Masters Thesis, University of Central Florida, 2008), 76.

The violence was not surprising considering the political climate of the 1990s. This decade saw a backlash against minorities from mainstream America. The rise of ultra right-wing political candidates such as Pat Buchanan reflected the xenophobic atmosphere that existed in the United States at the time. Buchanan, in his 1992 Republican National Convention speech, rallied America to “take back our cities, take back our culture, and take back our country”¹¹⁴. This tense atmosphere is further confirmed by Ruth Coffey, founder of Stop Immigration Now, who exclaimed, “I have no intention of being the object of conquest, peaceful or otherwise, by Latinos, Asians, Blacks, Arabs, or any other group of individuals who claimed my country”¹¹⁵. It is not perplexing that Proposition 187 (also known as Save Our State initiative) arose in California, a state with a high Latino population. Proposition 187 attempted to restrict illegal immigrants from having a social safety net such as healthcare, social security and education.

Given the hatred against the Mexicans that California was depicting at the time, soccer served as a space where this marginalized group could express their anger at mainstream America. The booing of the national anthem and the pelting of the U.S. players was a symbolic fight against their marginalization in a xenophobic society. In fact, *La Opinion* observed that the display looked like “a protest against Proposition 187”¹¹⁶. Journalist Sergio Munoz added that the display against the American national team was a result of the “xenophobic, nativist, protectionist and isolationist undercurrents that are

¹¹⁴ Fernando Delgado, “*Sports and Politics: Major League Soccer and the Latino Audience*,” *Journal of Sports and Social Issues*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (1999): 43.

¹¹⁵ Fernando Delgado, “*Sports and Politics*,” 43.

¹¹⁶ *La Opinion*, “Extremos del Fanatismo,” 18 February, 1998 cited in Rodriguez, “*A Pure Space to be Mexican*,” 76.

alive and well in California”¹¹⁷. Scenes such as these, however, were still much preferred when compared to the horrific events taking place during the LA Riots. Soccer in the U.S., much like in England and Scotland, became a ‘pressure release valve’ for marginalized minorities to express their grievances and “channel their political energies into a harmless pastime” to avoid larger conflict in society¹¹⁸. A win for Mexico against the United States symbolized a win for the Mexican immigrants against mainstream America, which made the grievances that they suffered in society more palatable.

Juxtaposing the different views on the event between Mexican Americans and white Americans, we find that the former played down the political significance of the crowd’s actions while the latter derided it. Bill Plaschke, a white American writer for *The Los Angeles Time*, lamented, “why would those who attend U.S. schools and receive U.S. medical care feel it necessary to pelt any U.S. player running near the stands with water and beer?” He further added, “It’s one thing to cheer for Mexico, the native country of many of those 91,000 fans, it’s another thing to boo and ridicule the U.S., the home country of those same people”¹¹⁹. Alexi Lalas, captain of the U.S. national team, reflected similar resentment when he complained, “I’m all for roots and understanding where you come from and having a respect for your homeland, but tomorrow morning all of those people are going to get up and work in the United States and live in the United States and

¹¹⁷ Sergio Munoz, “Star-Spangled Banter; Fan’s unruly behavior was nothing out of ordinary for any sport,” *Los Angeles Times*, 17 February, 1998 cited in cited in Rodriguez, “*A Pure Space to be Mexican*,” 76.

¹¹⁸ Franklin Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 205.

¹¹⁹ Plaschke, “*Star Spangled Banter*,” cited in cited in Rodriguez, “*A Pure Space to be Mexican*,” 76.

have all the benefits of living in the United States. I would never be caught dead cheering for any other team than the United States because I know what it's given me"¹²⁰.

Contrasting these views, Sergio Munoz responded to Alexi Lalas' comments by countering that such events are natural occurrences at sports games and typical American fans are guilty of similar actions: "I would suggest to you [Alexi Lalas] to go sit among an Oakland Raider mob wearing a 49er shirt. You'll be lucky to come away unscathed, let alone wet"¹²¹. Munoz further proclaimed that "I have a problem when you wrap yourself in the stars and stripes and ponder, believing perhaps you are the true reincarnation of Uncle Sam, how can Mexicans be so ungrateful and cheer for Mexico! For heaven's sake, Alexi, this is just a game! The current agenda between Mexico and the United States is complicated enough with issues like immigration, drug trafficking and the most intense trade relation ever. Let's not add futbol".

From the views of Plaschke and Lalas, we can see that mainstream America does not have an understanding of the plight and marginalization that the Mexicans were experiencing in American and, most notably, Californian society. The rhetoric that conservatives such as Pat Buchanan used as well as Proposition 187 would undoubtedly cause anger within Mexican-American circles. Moreover, Mexicans were usually stuck in the lower rungs of society and worked poor paying jobs, thus were unable to "have all the benefits of living in the United States" that Lalas spoke of. This lack of understanding that mainstream white America has of the minorities' situation could be attributed to the

¹²⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, "This is much worse than trash talking," February 16, 1998 cited in cited in Rodriguez, "A Pure Space to be Mexican," 79.

¹²¹ Munoz, "Star-Spangled Banter," cited in cited in Rodriguez, "A Pure Space to be Mexican," 77.

insular and disjointed nature of U.S. society. In the 1980s, suburban ‘white flight’ was rampant throughout the Sunbelt¹²². There were protests against extending public transportation to suburbs and many instances of all-white schools. In Los Angeles, the efforts of the Home Owners Association (HOA) lead to “ethnic inhabitants of Los Angeles in small ethnic enclaves away from the affluent predominately white Hollywood LA”¹²³. The Mexican community’s lack of visibility within mainstream America meant that middle class Americans were often unaware of the minorities’ plight¹²⁴. Soccer was one of the few spaces that bring Mexicans into the attention of mainstream America. Munoz, on the other hand, understood the tense political situation between Mexicans and Americans and suggested that Americans should “keep things in perspective” and not add soccer into this mix. This underlines the importance of soccer, as it was one of the few spaces where Mexicans could express their anger and celebrate their nationality without it taking on overt political tones. If this space were taken away, immigrants would lose the one medium where they could express their anger against America without too much backlash. By politicizing soccer, the United States would lose one of its few ‘pressure releasing valves’.

Conclusion

Overall, we see that soccer allowed different groups in society to distinguish themselves and express their grievances without being overtly confrontational. For the Yuppies, soccer assisted in helping this group form a class-based identity against the blue collar and the poor. Meanwhile, soccer enabled women to preach feminist ideals and

¹²² Gil Troy and Vincent J. Cannato, *Living in the Eighties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 44.

¹²³ Paola Rodriguez, “A Pure Space to be Mexican: Ethnic Mexicans and the U.S-Mexico Soccer Rivalry, 1990-2002,” (Masters Thesis, University of Central Florida, 2008), 88.

¹²⁴ Anderson, “*Los Angeles: The New Ellis Island*,”

demarcate themselves from a conservative and male dominated American society. Finally, soccer allowed minorities to express their national pride, anger at their marginalization as well as recreate feelings of community and kinship. Moreover, it helped pacify ethnic tensions. Given how soccer was able to reflect so many of the changes taking place in the United States, in addition to its role in serving as a pacifying force for tensions in society, this sport, at least from the seventies to the nineties, was truly America's game.

Conclusion: Football, the World's Game?

When sociologist Norbert Elias said in 1982 that football has a complexity, which “corresponds to the complexity of modern, highly civilized societies in general” he could not have been more accurate¹. It is striking how football is able to serve as a microcosm to a modern society. In Victorian England, we saw that the debates between professional and amateur football reflected the tensions caused by the rise of working class power within the political sphere. ‘The Old Firm’ rivalry, on the other hand, showed us that the flaring of sectarian tensions often went beyond the basic Glaswegian Protestant-Catholic divide. Instead, sectarian hatred was a veil for underlying economic and political problems. Finally, football mirrored a multitude of political and social developments in the United States during the 1980s and 1990s. These developments included the rise of the Yuppies as well as a reassertion of differences by both feminists and minorities.

One constant theme throughout these different cities/countries is football’s ability to help create a more harmonious society. In England, football assisted in pacifying class antagonism and served as a unifying force for society, bringing the working class together with the elites. By allowing the working class to take over the playing fields while the elites took over the administration, football was able to ‘opiate of the masses’. This change allowed the English upper class to channel working class political energy into a harmless pastime in addition to solving societal problems such as working class alcoholism. Football enabled these effects because it provided an escape for the working

¹ Norbert Elias and Eric Dunning *Quest for Excitement: Sport and leisure in the civilizing process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) cited in Sybille Frank and Silke Steets, *Stadium Worlds: Football, Space and the Built Environment*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 2.

class' drab "industrial degradation"². For Glasgow, 'The Old Firm' rivalry became an effective outlet for all the political and economic tensions in society, which masqueraded under sectarian hatred. Much like in England, football stadiums provided a relatively controlled space where agitated groups could express their anger. In America, football allowed three very different groups in society to distinguish themselves without being overtly confrontational. While the Yuppies used football to separate themselves from the masses, feminists and minorities utilized football to differentiate themselves from mainstream America. Usually, turning one's back on others in society is seen as traitorous and unpatriotic. Demarcating themselves through sports, however, somewhat depoliticizes their actions leading to substantially less backlash. It is truly a mark of football's universal appeal that it was able to make such a big mark on a society that tends to treat this sport as an afterthought.

Looking towards the Future:

Football in England

Of course, football's role in society is not compartmentalized by time. This sport still plays a major role in all the societies that were covered in this paper. During the late 20th century, the struggle over the 'ownership' of English football, much like what took place when the elites and working class were debating professionalization, manifested again. This struggle resurfaced due to globalization. Up until the late 1980s, the working class completely dominated the playing field and the stands. The elites of England treated the game as a "slum sport played by slum people" due to the working class make up of

² Blake, "*The Shipbuilders*," 91.

the fans³. Prime Minister Margret Thatcher even called football supporters “the enemy within”⁴. Much like when Ernest Ensor complained about working class participation in the 1890s, the elite’s disdain of football was due to their perceptions of poor behavior by the working class crowds. Part of this anger was not unfounded as this was a period where English hooliganism was at its peak. From the late 1980s onwards, however, elites began stamping their influence on the game through the effects of globalization. At a time when foreign products began flooding the English shop floors and neighborhoods were undergoing gentrification, football clubs also started bringing in increasing numbers of foreign imports and ‘gentrifying’ their stadiums.

Chelsea Football Club serves as a striking example. In the 1990s, they started bringing in numerous Italian and Dutch coaches to “leave their flashy foreign imprints”⁵. They also became the first club in England to send out a squad, which did not have a single Englishmen. The old terraces where working class fans would stand (and where most of the hooligan clashes took place) were replaced by actual seating, which of course were more expensive. The club underwent such changes, as it wanted to shed its working class hooligan identity and start attracting the “fashion-conscious effete”⁶. Through romanticizing the club with a European flair and making safer stadiums, the elites and middle class increasingly started reentering the stands. Even women became a common sight. Despite these improvements, however, ticket prices did not rise to an extortionate rate (less than £40 a ticket), thus working class fans were not completely precluded from

³ Franklin Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 95.

⁴ Foer, “*How Soccer Explains the World*,” 95.

⁵ Foer, “*How Soccer Explains the World*,” 94

⁶ Foer, “*How Soccer Explains the World*,” 94

Stamford Bridge (Chelsea's stadium). In fact, the stadium now exhibits close interaction between people from a whole range of socioeconomic group including "labor and management, street cleaner and advertising executive"⁷. Having the rich and the poor share a public space in such close proximity week in week out can only be good for fostering understanding. As Foer argues, "in the course of English history this may be an earth-shattering development"⁸. Thus, football has continued its role as a unifying force for English society.

Football in Glasgow

During the 1980s, there were still a high number of violent crimes connected to the Rangers-Celtic rivalry. From the 1990s onwards, however, there has been a sharp decline in such crimes⁹. This declining rate of violence is in line with our previous analysis of linking sectarian tensions to poor economic conditions. The 1980s was an era in which Glasgow's economy was failing due to its collapsing manufacturing base¹⁰. By the 1990s, however, Glasgow had become Scotland's largest urban economy and generates £15.7 billion Gross Value Added annually¹¹. Moreover, it is currently one of the fastest growing cities in Britain. In the last ten years, more than 70,000 new jobs were created¹². With this prosperous economy, it is not surprising that the sectarian clashes found in 'Old Firm' matches has somewhat subsided.

⁷ Foer, "How Soccer Explains the World," 97.

⁸ Foer, "How Soccer Explains the World," 97.

⁹ Murray, "The Old Firm," 300.

¹⁰ Entrust, "Regenerating Neighborhoods in Partnership," Entrust

<http://www.ensure.org/entrust/summary1/4.4.4.Glasgow.htm> (accessed April 22, 2011).

¹¹ Glasgow Economic Partnership, "Glasgow Economic Facts," Glasgow Economic Partnership, http://www.glasgoweconomicfacts.com/Dept.aspx?dept_id=125 (accessed April 22, 2011).

¹² Glasgow Economic Partnership, "Glasgow Economic Facts,"

That is not to say, however, that sectarian violence has disappeared from the stands completely. For example, in an ‘Old Firm’ match played in February 2005, there was one murder, 3 attempted murders and 62 arrests¹³. So what explains for this lingering violence? In any society, there will be a small number of disturbed individuals with “pathological hatreds”¹⁴. Likewise, it is only a small minority of fans who commits such acts of violence¹⁵. As Murray argues, “Celtic and Rangers cannot be blamed for killings carried out by depraved individuals wearing their colors”¹⁶. If the Celtic-Rangers rivalry is taken away, these individuals will just shift their hatred into another venue. While only a small minority uses the Old Firm rivalry as an excuse for unspeakable violence, there are still large sections of the crowd who display bigotry. One still frequently hears “we’re up to our knees in Fenian blood” and “Fuck the Queen, Orange Bastards” whenever the Rangers and Celtic face each other¹⁷. Nevertheless, this anger displayed by fans is actually a continuation of the Old Firm’s role as a safety release valve for society as it allows men to “join the tradition and institutions of their forefathers, to allay fears about abandoning history without having to embrace their forefathers’ eschatology”¹⁸. Indeed, Glaswegian society outside of football displays a surprisingly little amount of religious discrimination, as a 2001 survey showed, “only 1% of those surveyed thought they had been victimized because of their religion and one of those seven individuals was non-Christian”¹⁹. By allowing members of the Scottish society to live out their political and

¹³ *The Observer*, “Probe reveals Old firm Bigotry shame”, Feb 27, 2005.

¹⁴ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 300.

¹⁵ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 300.

¹⁶ Murray, “*The Old Firm*,” 300.

¹⁷ Foer, “*How Soccer Explains the World*,” 50.

¹⁸ Foer, “*How Soccer Explains the World*,” 56.

¹⁹ Steve Bruce, “Scottish Sectarianism? Lets lay Rest to this Myth,” *The Guardian*, April 24, 2011.

religious anxieties in the stadiums, this rivalry enabled “the much more regulated civilized everyday social order beyond the sporting event to remain intact”²⁰. In any case, Glasgow’s situation is much more desirable than the scenes taking place in Belfast, where men who desired to “join the tradition and institutions of their forefathers” and to “allay fears about abandoning history” resort to the use of petrol bombs, bricks, bottles and blast bombs²¹.

Football in America

From the nineties into the noughties, football [soccer] has been gaining an increasing role in the American cultural lexicon. One important development in the 1990s, which was not fully discussed in the previous chapters, was the rise of the ‘soccer mum’. Soccer mums played a crucial role in the 1996 presidential election between Bill Clinton and Bob Dole as they were the “most sought after group of swing voters”²². In this context, soccer mums were the “the overburdened middle income working mother who ferries her kids from soccer practice to scouts to school”²³. By appealing to this group of voters through programs such as teen curfews, installation of v-chips into televisions and expansion of the Family and Medical Leave act, Clinton won the election with “the largest gender gap in the history of voting in the U.S.”²⁴. Such was the frequency of which ‘soccer mum’ was used in mainstream media during this period that the American Dialect Society voted this term word of the year in 1996.

²⁰ Frank and Steets, “*Stadium Worlds*,” 3.

²¹ *The Sun*, “Belfast March Violence Flares,” Jul 13, 2010.

²² Susan J. Carroll, “*The Disempowerment of the Gender Gap: Soccer Moms and the 1996 Elections*,” *PS: Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 32, no. 1 (1999): 9

²³ Carroll, “*The Disempowerment of the Gender Gap*,” 9.

²⁴ Carroll, “*The Disempowerment of the Gender Gap*,” 11.

Although from the 1970s to the 1990s, a group's devotion to football was a point of differentiation between themselves and others in American society, by the 2000s, football has started to become a unifying force. Globalization too played a part in this change, as MLS (Major League Soccer) teams have been able to import some of the biggest European football stars including David Beckham and Thierry Henry. With such stars coming to the MLS, there has been an increase in mainstream interest of football. For example, many fans would go to L.A Galaxy games "just to see Beckham"²⁵. In fact, throughout the 2010-2011 season, the Galaxy had an average attendance of 25,999 fans in its 27,000 seats stadium (this percentage of seats filled is quite high even for European standards)²⁶. Through youth development programs such as Project 40, the men's national football team is also getting stronger. Indeed, the U.S barely missed out on a place in the 2010 world cup quarterfinals by a narrow lost in extra time to Ghana. If the 2010 World Cup was anything to go by, mainstream Americans are increasingly identifying with football, joining the Yuppies, minorities and women in football fandom. This increase in American football fans is apparent in the aforementioned match between U.S and Ghana, where approximately 19 million Americans tuned in to watch²⁷. Even American minorities, who are usually notorious for booing the U.S, have begun showing support for the U.S national team. Richard Lopez, a Peruvian-American, serves as an example. When asked about whom he would be supporting in the 2006 World Cup, he replied, "when the U.S. scores a goal, am I going to be jumping out of my seat and high-

²⁵ ESPN Soccernet, "Coming to American: Beckham to sign with the Galaxy,"

²⁶ ESPN Soccernet, "Coming to American: Beckham to sign with the Galaxy,"

²⁷ Michael Hiestand, "USA-Ghana World Cup match on ABC drew historic TV ratings," *USA Today*, June 27, 2010.

fiving my friends? Yes!"²⁸ Although it remains to be seen whether football can over take or at least move up to the level of the 'Big 3' (American football, basketball and baseball), we can be certain that football has a bright future in the U.S and will continue bringing Americans from different walks of life together through their love of the game.

Overall, we can see that football has and continues to bring benefits to societies all over the globe. Its influence almost seems to transcend time and space. Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm could not have been more correct when he asserted, "the sport the world made its own was association football"²⁹. There is arguably no cultural practice that is as universal as football. Given the amount of good it has done for societies all over the world, football is truly the world's game.

²⁸ *The Washington Post*, "Rooting for your roots," June 19, 2006.

²⁹ Andrei S. Markovits and Steven L. Hellerman, *Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 7.

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