

# Crowd Psychology & Public Order Policing: An Overview of Scientific Theory and Evidence.

Submission to the HMIC Policing of Public Protest Review Team



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The scientific literature overwhelmingly supports the contention that collective conflict can emerge during crowd events as a consequence of the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of police force. This occurs because of the unanticipated impact that policing can have upon crowd psychology and dynamics. There is now compelling evidence that the most effective means for achieving proportionality in the policing crowds is through a strategic focus upon facilitation and a graded, differentiated and information led approach to the use of force. It is recommended that within the U.K police public order strategy and tactics are developed in ways that increase the links between tactical responses and continuous 'dynamic risk assessment'. To achieve such changes it is proposed that it will be necessary to a) undergo a thorough reform of public order training within the U.K. in order to develop greater conformity with scientific knowledge and evidence; b) increase police capability for 'dialogue' and communication with crowds and formally recognise these as primary tactical options for public order policing.

### Executive summary

This report was commissioned by the HMIC in July, 2009 and authored by one of Europe's leading scientific authorities on crowd psychology and behaviour<sup>1</sup>. Covering a wide range of relevant research from disciplines as diverse as Social Psychology, Criminology and Social History it provides an overview of the literature on scientific crowd psychology from its origins in the nineteenth Century to date. The report gives particular focus to more recent developments in scientific understanding and the implications of this for the successful management of crowd events. The central conclusions and recommendations are as follows:

1. Research overwhelmingly demonstrates that the indiscriminate use of force by the police during an event can negatively impact upon crowd dynamics to increase the risk that a crowd poses to 'public order'.
  - *The disproportionate and indiscriminate threat or use of force can create psychological processes in the crowd that draw into conflict those who had come to the event with no prior conflictual intention<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, police strategy and tactics should be oriented toward proactively avoiding the production of these processes during crowd events.*
  - *This can be facilitated by enhancing and actively creating perceptions of police legitimacy among crowd participants through a) a strategic orientation toward the facilitation of peaceful behaviour within a crowd; b) a graded and information led tactical profile which has a dynamic capacity for achieving dialogue and communication with those within crowds before, during and after the event; c) avoidance of the undifferentiated threat or use of force.<sup>3</sup>*
2. The Elaborated Social Identity Model of crowd behaviour (ESIM) is now the leading scientific theory of crowd psychology. It provides a theoretical basis for accurately explaining and predicting the nature of crowd behaviour, particularly as this relates to the emergence of collective 'disorder'<sup>4</sup>.
  - *The ESIM recognises the contextually determined nature of crowd action and defines the social psychological processes determining the positive and negative impacts that police tactics can have upon crowd dynamics. The ESIM has been extensively validated via studies of a wide range of different types of crowd event, attracts a high level of support within the scientific community and is consistent with the wide array of literature on 'public disorder' from Criminology<sup>5</sup> to Social History<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The author is part of an informal team of scientific experts in partnership with Prof. Stephen Reicher (University of St Andrews) and Dr. John Drury (University of Sussex).

<sup>2</sup> Reicher, S.D. (1996). 'The Battle of Westminster': Developing the social identity model of crowd behaviour in order to explain the initiation and development of collective conflict. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 115-134; Drury, J. & Reicher, S. D. (2000). Collective action and psychological change: The emergence of new social identities. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 579-604; Stott, C.J. & Drury, J. (2000). Crowds, context and identity: dynamic categorization processes in the 'poll tax riot'. *Human Relations*, 53, 247-273.

<sup>3</sup> Reicher, S., Stott, C., Cronin, P. & Adang, O. (2004) An Integrated Approach to Crowd Psychology and Public Order Policing. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*. 27, 558-572.

<sup>4</sup> See Reicher, S. (2001) Crowds and Social Movements. In M. Hogg & S. Tindale (Eds.) *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes*. Oxford: Blackwell.

<sup>5</sup> For an overview of theories of public order policing see Waddington, D (2007) *Policing Public Disorder; Theory and Practice*. Basingstoke: Willan. P. 37-59.

<sup>6</sup> For examples Barrows, S. (1981) *Visions of the Crowd in Late Nineteenth Century France*. Yale University Press: Yale & London; Nye, R. (1975) *The Origins of Crowd Psychology*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

3. There is considerable evidence of the practical benefits of a policing approach based upon principles of the Elaborated Social Identity Model.
  - *The theory supports the argument that a 'graded' tactical profile that is strategically oriented toward facilitation, differentiation and communication is effective and efficient at managing crowd dynamics, promoting 'self-policing' and improving police community relationships*<sup>7</sup>.
  - *These principles and tactics have a proven track record and international recognition as a model of good practice with respect to the policing of football matches and tournaments with an international dimension*<sup>8</sup>.
  - *Evidence from international experience supports the contention that a range of police tactics should be formally developed for the policing of crowd events within the UK which enhance police capability for 'dynamic risk assessment', dialogue and communication*<sup>9</sup>.
4. 'Classic' crowd psychology is currently used as the theoretical basis for public order training in England and Wales. This theoretical position is outdated, unsustainable scientifically and it is critical that training is updated to reflect contemporary theory and evidence.
  - *'Classic' theory suffers from a number of biases, lacks supporting evidence and cannot adequately explain the behaviour of crowd particularly as this relates to the emergence of collective conflict. Moreover, 'classic' theory proposes that crowds are irrational, dangerous and open to easy exploitation by agitators and therefore implies that physical crowds are single psychological entities posing inherent dangers to public order.*
  - *Research suggests that this input into police training is leading to circumstances of ineffective public order policing which rely too heavily upon containment and dispersal through the indiscriminate use or threat of force and which miss important opportunities for the enhancement of good practice.*<sup>10</sup>
  - *Police public order training must be thoroughly updated at the levels of strategy, tactics and operational practice to ensure greater integration with scientific knowledge. It must also include a research capability in collaboration with science to assess the potential positive and negative impacts of police strategy and tactics upon crowd dynamics.*

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<sup>7</sup>Reicher, S., Stott, C., Drury, J., Adang, O., Cronin, P., & Livingstone, A. (2007) Knowledge-Based Public Order Policing: Principles and Practice. *Policing*, 1, 403–415; Stott, C. & Adang, O. (2009) Understanding and managing risk: policing football matches with an international dimension in the European Union. Slagelse, Denmark: Bavnebanke Press.

<sup>8</sup> See for a detailed overview Stott, C & Pearson, G (2007) Football 'hooliganism', policing and the war on the 'English Disease'. London: Pennant Books.

<sup>9</sup> Stott, C.J., Adang, O.M., Livingstone, A., & Schreiber, M. (2008) Tackling Football Hooliganism: A Quantitative Study of Public Order, Policing and Crowd Psychology. *Psychology Public Policy and Law*. Vol. 14, No. 2, 115–141; Stott, C.J., Adang, O.M., Livingstone, A., & Schreiber, M. (2007) Variability in the collective behaviour of England fans at Euro2004: public order policing, social identity, intergroup dynamics and social change. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 75-100. Holgersson, S (2009) Dialogue Police: Experiences, Observations and Possibilities. Stockholm: The Swedish National Police Board. Knutson, J. & Holgersson, S. (in press) Dialogue policing – a means for less collective violence?. In T. Madensen & J. Knutsson (eds) *Crime Prevention Studies: Preventing Collective Violence*. Monsey, NY and Cullompton, Devon, UK: Criminal Justice Press and Willan Publishing.

<sup>10</sup> Stott, C.J & Reicher, S.D (1998a), Crowd action as intergroup process: Introducing the police perspective, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 509-529; Drury, J., Stott, C., & Farsides, T. (2003), The role of police perceptions and practices in the development of public disorder, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 33(7), pp. 1480-1500. Stott, C., Livingstone, A. and Hoggett, J. (2008) Policing football crowds in England and Wales: a model of 'good practice'? *Policing and Society*, 18, 258-281; Hoggett, J. & Stott, C. (in press, a) Crowd psychology, public order police training and the policing of football crowds. *Policing: An international Journal of Police Strategies and Management*; Hoggett, J. & Stott, C (in press, b) The role of crowd theory in determining the use of force in public order policing. *Policing and Society*.

*The historical origins of classic crowd psychology.*

It is impossible to adequately understand the relationships between crowd psychology and public order policing without discussing the historical origins of crowd theory and its linkages to the history of political protest and urban unrest in Western Europe. This is perhaps most evident from the history of nineteenth century France, the birth place of 'scientific' crowd psychology. From the revolution of 1789 through to the end of the nineteenth century France was beset by political instability linked to the capability of crowds to threaten or overthrow successive political regimes. It was in this context that crowd psychology emerged as a 'scientific' basis for understanding, controlling and undermining the threat that working class protest posed to the emerging industrial capitalist economy.

The collapse of the French military during the Franco Prussian war of 1871 and the declaration of the socialist 'Paris Commune' of the same year inspired one of Europe's then most respected academic historians to write a detailed social history of France. The book ran to eleven volumes and was called the '*Origines de la France contemporaine*', the first volume of which, '*L'ancien Regime*', was published in 1876<sup>11</sup>. What is relevant about Taine's treatise is that it provided the first modern (i.e. post Darwinian positivist) 'pseudo-scientific' account of the psychology of crowd behaviour. Taine is acknowledged by historians to have been a political conservative who through this work sought to build a sustained intellectual assault on the social theories of the Enlightenment and in particular Rousseau's social contract<sup>12</sup>. Central to this political project was a specific theory of the crowd and its psychology.

Taine proposed that the crowds of nineteenth century France were '*mobs*' populated by the '*lower orders*' who were subject to '*vibration of the nervous mechanism*', '*contagion*', and '*feverishness*', and thus easily influenced by '*criminals*' and '*fugitives from justice*'. He proposed that this left a highly evolved hierarchical French society open to the primitive barbarity and irrationality of the mass; pathology made concrete through the actions of the revolutionary crowd. Taine's political analysis was therefore tied fundamentally to ideas about how the evolved social order needed to be protected from the inherent irrationality and pathology of the crowd. Indeed, he explicitly recommended that the forces of order were required to act as a "*dyke*" to resist the "*torrent*" of the brute forces of the crowd; "*despotic if need be against their despotism.*"<sup>13</sup>

It is universally understood by contemporary academics that Taine's historical analysis was not substantiated by first hand data as would be expected of scientific research today and politically biased. However, Taine's 'scientific' work was published at a time when the crowd and mass society was becoming an ever increasing theoretical and political concern throughout Europe. It was hoped that the emerging 'positivist' sciences would not simply supply a valid understanding of the problem of the crowd but also provide solutions. It was Taine's social history that provided the theoretical model, assumptions and scientific credentials for just such a perceived solution. However, the central figure in popularising this form of crowd psychology was without doubt Gustavé Le Bon whose classic '*Psychologie des Foules*'<sup>14</sup>, was first published in 1895. This work is acknowledged as

<sup>11</sup> Taine. H (1876) Trans. John Durand. Daldy, Ibister & Co. London.

<sup>12</sup> McClelland, J.S. (1989) *The Crowd and the Mob: From Plato to Canetti*. London: Unwin. McClelland, J.S. (ed) (1970) *The French Right: From De Maistre to Maurras*. Jonathan Cape: London.

<sup>13</sup> *L'ancien Regime*; p.242

<sup>14</sup> LeBon, G. (1895, trans. 1926) *The Crowd: A study of the popular mind*. London: Unwin.

the most widely read social psychology text of all time. But Le Bon's work was influential not due its scientific validity, because he like Taine did not draw upon data, but because Le Bon took the findings of the closed societies of science and disseminated them to a public and political elite eager to understand and control the crowd at a time of increasing threat of socialist revolution<sup>15</sup>.

Le Bon essentially recapitulated in more technical form Taine's pathologisation of crowd psychology. He proposed three central mechanisms: submergence, contagion and suggestibility. Submergence refers to the loss of the individual identity among participants through the 'anonymity' assumed to be inherent in the crowd. Contagion refers to the uncritical social influence mechanism that subsequently emerges which allows any idea or sentiment to spread unheeded through the crowd. And suggestibility is the 'hypnotic' psychological state induced by submergence that allows contagion to occur. Le Bon proposed that through these mechanisms behaviour within a crowd is no longer governed by individual rationality but by the '*law of mental unity*'. That is, in the crowd, the individual self or identity disappears, to be replaced by what Le Bon referred to as a '*group mind*' or '*racial unconscious*'— characterized by reduced intelligence, atavistic impulses and emotionality. Thus, Le Bon proposed that through these mechanisms the civilized lone individual descends '*several rungs of civilization*' and in the crowd '*is a barbarian*'<sup>16</sup>.

There have of course been various challenges to the 'classic' crowd psychology promoted by Le Bon that are too numerous and detailed to deal with in this report<sup>17</sup>. These critiques have primarily been built around the dominant view within the social historical literature that the actions of the crowds of nineteenth Century France were not random explosions of meaningless violence but highly structured. As such it is argued that these crowd events must be understood as meaningful collective responses to the actions of the State and its forces of order among those disenfranchised and disempowered by the industrial revolution. In other words the psychology and behaviour of these crowds were fundamentally linked to the social understandings of crowd participants and to the social and intergroup processes of the context in which crowd events occurred<sup>18</sup>. However, the 'scientific' crowd psychology that emerged during this period systematically ignores the possibility of the social determination and rationality of crowd action and therefore cannot provide an adequate conceptual framework for understanding crowd violence.

None the less, the 'classic' theoretical account of crowd psychology has also attracted powerful empirical support within the American mainstream of experimental social psychology during the latter half of the twentieth Century. This support comes primarily from the tradition of 'deindividuation' research originated by Leon Festinger<sup>19</sup> and subsequently developed by others<sup>20</sup>. The deindividuation model proposes that 'anonymity', a concept drawn directly from Le Bon, reduces self awareness within crowds and in so doing increases the tendency for individuals to

<sup>15</sup> Barrows, S. (1981); McClelland, J.S. (1989); Nye, R. (1975)

<sup>16</sup> Le Bon, 1895, p.32.

<sup>17</sup> For an overview see Reicher, S. (2001). Crowds and Social Movements. In M. Hogg & S. Tindale (Eds.) Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes. Oxford: Blackwell.

<sup>18</sup> See for examples Barrows, S. (1981); Nye, R. (1975); Reddy, W.M (1977) The textile trade and the language of the crowd at Rouen, 1752 - 1871. Past and Present, 74, 62 – 89; George Rudé (1964) The Crowd in History: A Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730-1848 London: Wiley. Tilly, C, Tilly, L, Tilly, R. (1975) The Rebellious Century 1830 - 1930. J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

<sup>19</sup> Festinger, L., Pepitone, A. and Newcomb T. (1952). Some consequences of deindividuation in a group. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 47, 382-389.

<sup>20</sup> Zimbardo, P. G., (1969). The human choice: Individuation, reason, and order versus deindividuation, impulse, and chaos. Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 17, 237-307; Diener, E., Fraser, S. C., Beaman, A. L. and Kelem, R. T. (1976). Effects of deindividuation variables on stealing among Halloween trick-or-treaters. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 33(2), 178-183.

express violent and aggressive behaviour. However, a more recent meta-analysis of sixty independent experimental studies of the effects of deindividuation conditions has demonstrated that the data from these studies does not support and therefore seriously undermines the scientific validity of deindividuation or 'classic' theory<sup>21</sup>.

Therefore, the 'classic' crowd psychology originating in late nineteenth century France, but developed by modern experimental social psychology, lacks any sustainable empirical support. Classic theory also decontextualises crowd behaviour and as such ignores any determining role played by the actions of the forces of order or the broader social context in which crowd events occur. Consequently, it cannot explain the meaningful nature of collective action during crowd events and in these senses alone must be considered as seriously flawed. None the less it has produced a very specific and widely adopted theoretical model of crowd psychology. This model assumes that crowd behaviour is ultimately a pathological intrusion into modern society because mechanisms inherent to the crowd undermine individual identity and the rational psychological basis of behaviour. In effect, 'classic' theory proposes that individuals within crowds are uniformly dangerous and unpredictable because they can spontaneously coalesce into irrational and violent 'mobs' simply due to mechanisms internal to the crowd. Moreover, as a function of these mechanisms 'mobs' can easily come under the influence of agitators. Given that from this perspective crowds are understood as unpredictable, volatile and dangerous it becomes almost self evident that they need to be controlled, and this control must be exerted primarily through the use of force.

#### *The social identity approach to crowd behaviour.*

The most important thing that must be said about 'classic' theory is that it is now completely outdated. Given the various problems regarding its validity and explanatory power various alternative theoretical models have superseded the Le Bonian or 'classical' account<sup>22</sup>. In particular, 'classic' theory has been replaced by the leading model of crowd psychology commonly referred to as the Elaborated Social Identity Model of crowd behaviour (ESIM)<sup>23</sup>. The ESIM has as its basis the proposition that a component part of the self concept determining human social behaviour derives from psychological membership of particular social categories (e.g., a policeman or demonstrator). Consequently, as well as having an idiosyncratic personal identity (i.e., an identity as a unique individual), crowd participants also have a range of 'social identities' which can become salient within the psychological system referred to as the 'self'. Collective action becomes possible when a particular social identity is simultaneously salient and therefore shared among crowd participants.

Thus, in contrast to the 'classic' account, being in a crowd does not entail a loss of identity so much as produce a shift in the focus of self definition among crowd participants away from unique individual attributes to the more shared, group-based defining attributes of the crowd. Moreover, acting in terms of a social identity means that there will be an increased tendency among those in the crowd to adhere to the norms, values and ideology of that social category (e.g., anti-war demonstrators acting in terms of an ideology of non-violent demonstrative identity at the outset of a

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<sup>21</sup> Postmes, T., & Spears, R. (1998). Deindividuation and anti-normative behaviour: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 123, 238-259

<sup>22</sup> For an overview of those theories of the crowd relevant to the issue of public order policing see Waddington, D (2007) *Policing Public Disorder; Theory and Practice*. Basingstoke: Willan. P. 37-59.

<sup>23</sup> The ESIM is derived from the now dominant theoretical models of group psychology and intergroup relations within 'European' social psychology see Turner, J, Oakes, P., Hogg, M., Reicher, S. & Wetherell, M (1987) *Rediscovering the social group: A self categorisation theory*. Basil Blackwell. Oxford.

demonstration). The shared identity also determines who and what can become influential in the crowd and gives crowd participants some basis for judging whether they are able to act in particular ways by signifying if others in the crowd are likely to support particular actions (e.g., intervention to prevent or support an argument with police). Salient social identities therefore orientate crowd members toward meaningful forms of collective action in any given context, both in terms of what behaviour is seen by them as appropriate or legitimate and what behaviour they feel is possible.

From its original proposition by Stephen Reicher the social identity approach to crowds has, unlike the 'classic' account, been underpinned by substantial empirical evidence that is at present unchallenged in the scientific literature. This body of data began through analysis of one of the major inner city disturbances in England in the 1980's<sup>24</sup>. However, since its initial proposition the social identity approach has been developed and gained further empirical support through studies of student 'rioting' during a protest against the removal of grants<sup>25</sup>, demonstrators 'rioting' during a protest against the implementation of a tax<sup>26</sup>, a series of protests around the extension of the M11 motorway in London<sup>27</sup>, and 'rioting' among football fans attending football matches with an international dimension<sup>28</sup>. This theoretical and empirical development to the ESIM has highlighted the importance of police tactics in shaping and reshaping a crowd's social identity and therefore in determining the nature of the collective behaviour that occurs during a crowd event over time, particularly in terms of the emergence and escalation of 'rioting'.

There were similar dynamics evident in each of the studies. Where police used relatively indiscriminate tactics of coercive force (e.g. baton charges) they would tend to do so against those in the crowd who saw themselves or others around them, as posing very little, if any, threat to public order. As a consequence there would be corresponding increases in the number of people in the crowd who perceived the police as an illegitimate force. Such interactive social psychological processes occurring during the crowd event would then lead directly to a change in the nature of the crowd's social identity (their shared sense of categorisation of 'us' and 'them') along two critically important dimensions defined by the ESIM in terms of the crowd dynamics of legitimacy and power.

On the one hand, the indiscriminate use of force would create a redefined sense of unity in the crowd in terms of the illegitimacy of and opposition to the actions of the police. Consequently, there would be an increase in the numbers within the crowd who would then perceive conflict against the police as acceptable or legitimate behaviour. On the other, this sense of unity and legitimacy in opposition to the police would subsequently increase the influence of and empower those prepared to engage in physical confrontation with the police<sup>29</sup>. Such processes could then draw the crowd into conflict even though the vast majority had no prior intention of engaging in disorder. In other words,

<sup>24</sup> Reicher, S.D. (1984) The St Pauls riot: An explanation of the limits of crowd action in terms of a social identity model. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 14, 1-21; Reicher, S.D. (1987) *Crowd Behaviour as Social Action*. In J.C. Turner et al (1987) *Rediscovering the social group: A self categorisation theory*. Basil Blackwell. Oxford.

<sup>25</sup> Reicher, S.D. (1996). 'The Battle of Westminster': Developing the social identity model of crowd behaviour in order to explain the initiation and development of collective conflict. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 115-134.

<sup>26</sup> Stott, C.J. & Drury, J. (2000). Crowds, context and identity: dynamic categorization processes in the 'poll tax riot'. *Human Relations*, 53, 247-273.

<sup>27</sup> Drury, J. & Reicher, S. D. (2000). Collective action and psychological change: The emergence of new social identities. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 579-604.

<sup>28</sup> For an overview see Stott, C. & Pearson, G. (2007) *Football Hooliganism, Policing and the War on the English Disease*. London: Pennant Books.

<sup>29</sup> For a detailed theoretical and technical analysis of how these dynamics of power are understood to operate in relationship to the psychology of social influence see Turner, J. C. (2005). Explaining the nature of power: A three-process theory. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 35, pp 1-22.

the development of widespread ‘rioting’ was not simply a product of mechanisms internal to the crowd nor of the predispositions of crowd members. Rather the psychology and social processes that made a ‘riot’ possible emerged as the outcome of specific forms of group level interactions that were largely and inadvertently initiated by police tactical responses.

*Classic crowd psychology and public order policing.*

In this respect the ESIM is consistent with the social historical evidence concerning the behaviour of crowds in nineteenth century France. Moreover, it is also consistent with a large body of contemporary evidence and theory from Criminology suggesting that there is a very intimate relationship between the dynamics of crowd violence and the tactics of public order policing<sup>30</sup>. Much of this literature points to a progressive global transition, post Second World War in democratic societies, from ‘reactive’ policing primarily grounded in the threat and use of force to a more ‘proactive’ consent based approach which relies less on the use of force and more on communication and negotiation. This distinction is often contrasted in terms of a strategic orientation to ‘escalated force’ versus ‘negotiated management’. Yet there is a strong debate within the same literature about how it is best to deliver the strategy of ‘negotiated management’ tactically<sup>31</sup>.

However, what the contrasting perspectives share is the assumption with ESIM that aggressive police tactics can and do have the capacity to negatively impact upon crowd dynamics. Moreover, despite evidence of these general trends in public order policing these researchers have also highlighted how the two strategic and tactical approaches can actually be applied simultaneously by different police forces or units within the same country and even within the same event<sup>32</sup>. Given this variability is acknowledged, the research literature on public order policing therefore raises two fundamental questions. What governs the application of different styles of public order policing and what are the underlying social psychological processes that determine their impacts upon crowd dynamics?

It is the ESIM that is the primary theoretical model that addresses the latter question<sup>33</sup>. Perhaps the primary theoretical model that seeks to address the former is that developed by della Porta & Reiter<sup>34</sup>. They propose a multiplicity of inter-related factors, such as the surrounding legal framework, the culture of the police, the political context and the pattern of interaction between

<sup>30</sup>See della Porta, D. & Reiter, H. (eds., 1998), *Policing Protest. The Control of Mass Demonstration in Western Democracies*, Minneapolis, The University of Minnesota Press; Hall, A. and W. de Lint (2003) ‘Policing Labour in Canada.’ *Policing and Society* 13/3: 219-234; Jefferson, T. (1990) *The Case Against Paramilitary Policing*, Buckingham: Open University Press; King, M. and Waddington, D. (2005) ‘Flashpoints Revisited: a critical application to the policing of anti-globalization protest’, *Policing & Society*, 15(3) 255-282; King, M. and Waddington, D. (2004) ‘Coping With Disorder?: the changing relationship between police public order strategy and practice – a critical analysis of the Burnley riot’, *Policing & Society*, 14(2) 118-137; Sheptycki, J. Eds. (2002) *Issues in Transnational Policing*, London: Taylor & Francis; D. Waddington, 2007; Waddington P. A. J. (1987) *Towards Paramilitarism? Dilemmas in Policing Civil Disorder*, *British Journal of Criminology*, 27: 37-46; Waddington P. A. J. (1991) *Strong Arm of the Law: Armed and Public Order Policing*, Oxford University Press; Waddington, P.A.J. (1993). *Dying in a Ditch: the use of police powers in public order*. *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, 21, 335-353; Waddington, P.A.J. (1994). *Liberty and Order, Public order policing in a capital city*. UCL Press, London.

<sup>31</sup> McCarthy, J.D. & McPhail, C. (1998) *The institutionalization of protest in the United States*, in D.S. Meyer, S. Tarrow (Eds), *Rowman and Littlefield*, Lanham, MD, pp.59 – 82; McPhail, C., Schweingruber, D. & McCarthy, J. (1998) *Policing Protest in the United States: 1960-1995*. Pp. 49-69 in della Porta, D. & Reiter, H. (eds.) *Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; Hall & De Lint, 2003

<sup>32</sup> Adang & Cuvelier (2001); Della Porta & Reiter (1998); Sheptycki (2002); Hall & De Lint (2003).

<sup>33</sup> There are other important and influential theories of public disorder most notable of which is the ‘Flashpoints’ model of David Waddington. But whilst consistent with ESIM these do not focus upon the social psychological dynamics of the events themselves rather the broader contextual determinants – see Waddington, D (2007).

<sup>34</sup> della Porta & Reiter (1998)



the police and the crowd. They go on to argue these variables then function together to produce 'police knowledge' which in turn determines the style of policing that is adopted. There is therefore considerable support within the literature for the suggestion that any adequate explanation of crowd behaviour and public disorder must include an analysis of police knowledge and behaviour.

Within the literature addressing the issue of 'police knowledge' the evidence suggests that one of the problems facing public order policing is that training in England and Wales deals very little, if at all, with the background scientific literature. During systematic observations of a range of training courses for public order policing in England and Wales there was little if any formal discussion of the background literature relating to crowd psychology or public order policing<sup>35</sup>. None the less the research suggests that implicit in much of the discussions about tactics were assumptions derived from the work of Gustavé Le Bon. Given that 'classic' theory has been extensively endorsed by social scientists from the nineteenth century onwards it should not be surprising that this research goes on to suggest that 'classic' theory has become institutionalised in public order training within England and Wales<sup>36</sup>.

Indeed, supporting this contention, classic theory appears in the pre read material for the 2006 version of the NPJA (then NCPE) Public Order Commanders Course which states for example, that *"a crowd is a device for indulging ourselves in a kind of temporary insanity by all going crazy together"*. The document goes on to state that *"all psychologists seem to agree, that membership of a crowd results in a lessening of an individual's ability to think rationally, whilst at the same time his / her more primitive impulses are elicited in a harmonious fashion with the emerging primitive impulses of all the other crowd members. The result being the establishment of a collective mind. As you can see, all these theorists have made points concerning crowd behaviour which contain a lot of truths."* Classic theory also appears in the input regarding crowd psychology in the 2007 version of the NPJA training for the policing of events (a course designed to support police training for the 2012 Olympics). The 2008 documentation regarding learning outcomes from this course states that trainees should be able to *"describe the make up of a mob"*. They should understand how *"based upon the research of Le Bon, a group of people may be termed either 'crowd' or 'mob'"* and that *"classical theories of crowd formation discuss how the mob is formed from a crowd"*<sup>37</sup>.

However, the scientific research on crowd dynamics suggests that a central problem with this theoretical perspective on crowd psychology is not simply that it is outdated and inconsistent with the scientific literature. Rather, that it leads to a perception among the police of crowds as inherently irrational and uniformly dangerous. Indeed, the research evidence supports the idea that as a consequence of this training police of all ranks in England and Wales tend to see the general heterogeneous composition of crowds in terms of a simple dichotomy; an irrational majority and a violent minority who can easily assert influence over the crowd. Moreover, where this understanding is in place there is also an increase in police officers support for and use of tactics which rely upon the use or threat of indiscriminate force. A convergence of these factors of 'police knowledge' then interacts with the practical constraints of operational policing (e.g. PSU tactical formations, protective equipment) in a way that increases the likelihood that the police will use

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<sup>35</sup> Observations conducted at two Initial Public Order Commander (IPOC) courses; One Major Sporting Events (MSE) course; One, Tactical Advisors course and three public order Common Minimum Standard (CMS) courses.

<sup>36</sup> Hoggett, J. & Stott, C. (in press, a) Crowd psychology, public order police training and the policing of football crowds. Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management.

<sup>37</sup> Page 4.

indiscriminate force against whole crowds even when it is only a minority that are judged to be posing any threat to public order<sup>38</sup>.

The ESIM and its supporting evidence also suggests that such indiscriminate use of force can then somewhat ironically contribute to a widespread *escalation* in the levels of public disorder. For example, during the 'anti-poll tax' demonstration in central London on the 31 of March 1990, a small sit down protest combined with some minor confrontation outside Downing Street led very rapidly to forceful police intervention against large sections of the demonstration. The evidence derived from a systematic study of this event suggests that the police decision to use force in this way was driven by the 'classic' view of crowd psychology and dynamics. As such the actions of a minority within the crowd just outside Downing Street led to the perception among police commanders that the entire crowd in this vicinity was likely to become disorderly. As a consequence a decision was taken to disperse the crowd from the whole of Whitehall.

But this research evidence also suggests that people in the crowd in Whitehall could see no threat to public order, just legitimate civil disobedience against what was seen by demonstrators as an unjust system of taxation. Consequently large numbers of demonstrators came to perceive the indiscriminately forceful intervention of the police as an attack on democratic rights. In technical terms people in the crowd began to collectively perceive their intergroup relationship with the police as illegitimate. Thus, the relatively indiscriminate use of force interacted with crowd dynamics in such a manner that it led to a change in the crowd's social identity. This change meant that there was an emergent psychological unity and shared perception within the crowd that participants were justified and powerful enough to confront the police. Of course, such emergent and escalating hostility was likely to confirm initial police views that the crowd was becoming disorderly which would correspond with the further increase in the scale and intensity of forceful intervention that was observed. Thus the research suggests that a process of interaction then cycled back and forth until it culminated in one of the largest riots ever witnessed in central London<sup>39</sup>.

But it should not be assumed that there is a simple deterministic process from crowd theory to operational practice. For example, it is evident from various observations of the policing of football crowds in England and Wales that a good deal of police good practice does occur with respect to managing crowds dynamics despite the overwhelming dominance of classic theory<sup>40</sup>. However, it is apparent that the way this practice is understood is largely experiential (i.e. good practice that is linked to police operational experience). With an absence of the correct theoretical knowledge, experienced police officers are not then in a position to fully understand the general principles through which this good practice is having its positive impact. It therefore becomes more challenging to extract these principles of good practice from specific local contexts, integrate them into training and apply them to other situations in a manner that assists the police locally and nationally in disseminating and coordinating good practice<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Stott, C.J & Reicher, S.D (1998a) Crowd action as intergroup process: Introducing the police perspective, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 509-529; Drury, J., Stott, C., & Farsides, T. (2003) The role of police perceptions and practices in the development of public disorder, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 33(7), pp. 1480-1500. Hoggett, J. & Stott, C (in press, b) The role of crowd theory in determining the use of force in public order policing. *Policing and Society*.

<sup>39</sup> Stott & Drury, 2000

<sup>40</sup> Stott, Livingstone & Hoggett (2007) Policing football crowds in England and Wales: a model of 'good practice'? *Policing and Society*, 18, 258-281.

<sup>41</sup> Hoggett, J & Stott (in press, a & b)

*Good practices in the management of public order during crowd events.*

Accordingly, it is a central theoretical position of the ESIM that collective disorder can and does emerge directly from the social identity processes and intergroup dynamics that materialise during crowd events, dynamics of which 'police knowledge' and tactics are ubiquitously a component part. Therefore, the central advantage of the social identity based model of crowd psychology is that it can and does begin to identify the key processes underlying the emergence and escalation of crowd conflict. But by the very same logic it is also able to provide a set of theoretical concepts and principles through which the likelihood of collective conflict can be reduced. Thus, Stephen Reicher and colleagues have outlined a set of ESIM derived principles relating to the effective management of crowds<sup>42</sup>; principles which have been partially incorporated into the 2003 version of the ACPO Manual of Guidance for Keeping the Peace.

These principles propose that prior to a crowd event it is important for police forces to *educate* themselves about the cultural norms of crowds and the legitimate intentions for participants that flow from these. It is recommended that the subsequent police strategy is not oriented exclusively toward the control of the crowd through the use or obvious threat of force but also the effective *facilitation* of the legitimate intentions underpinning crowd action. The police tactics for managing the event should then be capable of *communicating* police intentions to facilitate crowd members' rights, for example, to protest. Most importantly of all, if and when the police are required to use force that they *differentiate* between groups and individuals within the crowd and above all avoid the indiscriminate use of force.

A central feature of the development of the ESIM has been its application to the management of crowd dynamics in relation to football matches with an international dimension. For example, analysis of English and Scottish fan collective behaviour during the 1998 Football World Cup Finals in France showed that while perceptions of illegitimacy underlay conflict escalation in crowds, perceptions of legitimacy underlay absences of collective conflict<sup>43</sup>. What these studies also reveal is the complexity of the relationship between police tactics and crowd behaviour, particularly in terms of crowd participants' views of the legitimacy of police tactics and the appropriate junctures for police use of force. None the less this research confirms that perceptions of police legitimacy are critical because they affect the crowd's internal dynamics, facilitating or undermining the ability of those seeking conflict to exert social influence upon others in the crowd.

What these studies of football crowds also highlight is the need to conceptualise 'risk' to public order as a *process* arising from the operation of the group level dynamics that occur during crowd events (both within and between the crowd and police). In turn, the effectiveness of public order policing can be understood and analysed in terms of its ability to proactively manage these group level dynamics in a way that minimises the potential for large scale incidents of disorder to emerge. Put slightly differently, the ESIM suggests that the effectiveness of police strategy and tactics should be evaluated by their impact upon the crowd dynamics of legitimacy and power. However, fully testing the value of this ESIM approach to public order policing requires (1) systematic research on

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<sup>42</sup> Reicher, S., Stott, C., Cronin, P. & Adang, O. (2004) An Integrated Approach to Crowd Psychology and Public Order Policing. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*, 27, 558-572

<sup>43</sup> See Stott, C.J., Hutchison, P. & Drury, J. (2001) 'Hooligans' abroad? Inter-group dynamics, social identity and participation in collective 'disorder' at the 1998 World Cup Finals. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 40, 359-384; Stott, C.J. & Reicher, S.D. (1998b). How conflict escalates: The inter-group dynamics of collective football crowd 'violence'. *Sociology*, 32, 353-377.

the policing tactics and strategies that influence public order dynamics, and (2) the application of ESIM principles to develop specific guidelines for public order policing that are then successfully implemented at an operational level.

An important step toward generating such links between research and practice was taken in 2001, when the U.K. Home Office began to fund a programme of studies of the policing of English football fans travelling abroad. This research led by the University of Liverpool paid particular attention to developing a model of 'good practice' in public order policing with regard to the policing of high risk fan groups travelling to football matches with an international dimension. The intention was to subsequently make this model available such that it could be adopted and implemented by police forces across Europe, but in particular by the Portuguese authorities during the 2004 European Football Championships. The subsequent study observed crowd management practices at over thirty five fixtures with an international dimension, all categorised as high risk, which took place in nine European States. Data was gathered from police, fans and other relevant agencies which was then analysed to develop a theoretical model of 'dynamic risk' to public order and model of 'balanced' or 'graded' tactical police profile.

Given that the identities that drive collective action are open to change the model of 'dynamic risk' proposes that threat or 'risk' to public order during a crowd event should be conceptualised as a continuum. Movement along this continuum from low to high 'risk' can be affected by the perceived legitimacy of the intergroup relationships surrounding the crowd. The analysis suggested that a key factor governing movement along the 'risk continuum' was police tactical profile. In particular, where a 'balanced', or 'low profile', form of public order policing was in place this appeared to be most effective at minimising widespread 'hooliganism'. The critical underlying process being police capability to match or 'balance' their tactical profile proportionately to the actual levels and sources of risk to public order that were present during the event. To achieve this, the host force would need to develop a 'graded' tactical profile and ensure that their profile of policing was capable of rapid change in manner that accurately reflected the levels and sources of risk. But this required the host police to undertake constant 'dynamic risk assessment', address their information flow and their command and control capability to ensure that these assessments of risk subsequently informed tactical responses.

On this basis a model of police 'good practice' was developed. First, the initial stage of the operation should involve background preparation characterised by research not just upon those fans known to pose risk but also on the underlying culture of the fan group to be policed (e.g. what kind of behaviour do they engage in? What will be their primary legitimate motivations and intentions?) This understanding of fan culture should then be mapped onto the local context and, most importantly, consideration should be given to how the situation can be organised to facilitate the fans' legitimate intentions. Priority should be given to communicating with fan organisations about what behaviours will and will not be tolerated or where fans might like to gather to be together in a safe environment (e.g. establishing 'fan zones' with access to alcohol in popular areas).

The second stage involves initial contact with the mass of visiting fans, a stage that should be characterised by 'low impact' visibility, information gathering and monitoring. This stage is very important for establishing the perceived legitimacy of the relationships between the local police and fans, for defining the intention of the police to facilitate fans' legitimate behaviour and for

identifying those seeking to be confrontational. To this end, it was suggested that police officers should be deployed in pairs or in small groups in standard uniform preferably dispersed widely across and within crowds; if riot squad officers were to be used, they should be deployed also in pairs or small groups without helmets or shields and with batons sheathed. The police should engage in high levels of positive interpersonal interaction with fans (non-aggressive posture, smiles, nods, accommodating requests for photographs, etc). Where language is not a barrier, officers should try to communicate with fans to gather information about their demeanour, intentions, concerns and sensibilities. This initial stage would then be effective at assisting the host force in actively constructing perceptions of police legitimacy within the crowds and gathering information about the overall level of risk and in particular the activity and intentions of groups and individuals within crowds who may or may not be posing threats to public order.

There would, of course, be situations in which risk is identified. Depending upon the nature of these risks, the model of good practice proposed that certain forms of escalation in police deployment would be effective. This second stage of the graded tactical profile should be characterised by the firm but targeted communication of tolerance limits, and some increased visibility of the police's capability to use force. Certainly, officers monitoring fan behaviour in stage one will have identified those who are judged to be posing a potential risk. Further to this, a process of communication should be engaged defining the situation (so that all those present understand the police's awareness of the problem) and communicating to those posing the risk that they are provoking the potential for police sanction. Moreover, those fans acting legitimately should be allowed to leave the vicinity and some time to impose 'self-policing' – so that those within the crowd may begin to control those posing the problem. If a riot squad is used at this stage they should still be in standard or 'peace level' uniform (i.e. not at this stage wearing helmets or holding shields and batons in sheaths).

Should these measures not deal with the situation, then it was proposed that further escalation may be required. This third stage should normally be characterised by targeted intervention and the removal of situational risk factors (i.e. not simply targeting 'known hooligans', but making an intervention that is fully informed of the factors that are actually causing the problem). The objective of police deployment at this stage is to minimise risk and it is therefore essential that actions are not conducted that actually serve to escalate tensions. Therefore, as this escalation of force takes place, it is vital that valid intelligence about the source of the risk is communicated clearly to the intervention squads being deployed. It was made clear that it is simply not sufficient to act against a whole crowd of fans who happen to be present, unless there is validated situational evidence that they are uniformly seeking to provoke disorder.

Beyond this, there were of course, options for increased use of force including baton charges, water-cannon, gas, rubber bullets etc – but it was made clear that throughout the study the researchers had yet to witness a situation in a football context in which such weaponry had been used either appropriately or effectively. It was made clear once again that indiscriminate intervention would only initially increase the level of risk, but if police use of force was evidence led and accurately targeted, the intervention, even at this level, would not be seen as illegitimate by the majority of the crowd. Therefore police would be able to deal effectively with those issues threatening public order without themselves escalating the disorder. Having achieved this, there should then be a de-escalation policy in place to ensure an early restoration of normal level policing.

Thus, the research suggested that by continuously acting to gather information during events police were more capable of intervening in ways that achieved a differentiated use of force and engaged with risks to public order much earlier in the potential cycle of escalation. Moreover, where there was a strategic orientation of the police toward the facilitation of fans' lawful intentions and behaviours this tended to be combined with the capability to use of non-confrontational tactical options (such as interacting positively with fans). This facilitated police ability to gather 'real time' and valid intelligence of any emerging risk and to react rapidly to them in a manner that avoided the indiscriminate use of force. These tactics in turn appeared to be associated with shared perceptions among fans of the legitimacy of their relationship with the police. Moreover, there was evidence of lower levels of disorder, fans marginalising 'hooligans' and even seeking to prevent disorder by 'self-policing' those fans behaving in a manner likely to provoke aggressive police response<sup>44</sup>. In other words, a graded tactical profile was effective at managing the group level and social psychological dynamics of crowd events<sup>45</sup>

#### *Application and validation at Euro2004.*

This model of good practice and underlying theory made its most significant impact upon policy and operational practice through a series of consultations with the Portuguese Public Security Police (*Polícia de Segurança Pública* or PSP)<sup>46</sup> who then utilized it in the development of their 'use of force' strategy for the 2004 UEFA Football European Championships (Euro2004). Therefore the security policy for the tournament was in line with the research evidence and ESIM psychological theory<sup>47</sup>. The PSP's public order strategy and tactical model focused upon a four-stage graded intervention policy that was oriented toward facilitating fans' legitimate intentions and avoiding unnecessary or indiscriminate use of coercive force. Subsequently, the PSP cooperated with a major research study into the policing of the tournament and its impact on crowd psychology and behaviour<sup>48</sup> the data from which confirm the successful implementation of their strategy and tactics on the one hand, and extremely low levels of 'disorder' on the other.

More specifically, the data from this research suggests that where crowds were gathered (even during events defined by the authorities as posing increased risk) there was often no obvious uniformed police presence. Instead, police in standard uniform, working in pairs and small groups, would integrate themselves into crowds of fans. The role of these officers was to communicate with fans, facilitate (e.g. provide directions or advice), monitor for emergent risk and, if necessary, to provide a capability for dealing with low level problems (e.g. minor arguments between individuals in the street). Simultaneously, small teams of plain clothed officers would operate within crowds monitoring for and intervening against activity likely to provoke (e.g. groups or individuals acting in

<sup>44</sup> See Stott, C. & Adang, O. (2009) Understanding and managing risk - Policing football matches with an International Dimension in the European Union. Slagelse: Bavnepanke Press; Stott, C. J. & Adang, O.M.J. (2004) 'Disorderly' conduct: social psychology and the control of football 'hooliganism' at 'Euro2004'. *The Psychologist*. 318-319.

<sup>45</sup> Stott and Adang (2004)

<sup>46</sup> For example: Stott, C.J. & Adang, O (2002) Policing Euro 2000. Invited presentation to the 'Euro2004 – A Question of Security' Conference, Instituto Superior de Ciências Policiais e Segurança Interna, Lisbon; Stott, C.J & Adang, O.M.J. (2003) Policing Football Matches with an International Dimension in the European Union: understanding and managing risk. Unpublished report, U.K. Home Office. Stott, C.J. & Adang, O.M.J. (2003b). Crowd psychology and public order policing. Paper presented at PSP Euro2004 Strategy meeting, Instituto Superior de Ciências Policiais e Segurança Interna, Lisbon. Adang, O.M.J. & Stott, C.J. (2003). Policing football matches with an international dimension. Paper presented at CEPOL-seminar Sports Violence, Instituto Superior de Ciências Policiais e Segurança Interna, Lisbon; Adang, O.M.J. & Stott, C.J. (2004). Preparing for Euro2004: Policing international football matches in Portugal. Unpublished report for the Portuguese Public Security Police.

<sup>47</sup> Coordinating and Planning Committee for Euro2004 (PSP) (2003) Planning directive No/03. Level of Police Intervention to be adopted for Euro2004. PSP Coordinating and Planning Committee for Euro2004. National Directorate, Ministry of Internal Administration.

<sup>48</sup> Funded by Economic and Social Research Council (RES-000-23-0617) and the U.K. Home Office.

openly hostile ways). If larger scale problems emerged the PSP would move to a level two formation. This involved larger groups of police in standard uniform who would communicate with fans and negotiate potential solutions to problems. These groups could if necessary quickly escalate to level three formations by donning protective equipment carried with them on their belts.

Throughout, officers from the *Corpo de Intervenção* (the PSP's 'riot units') would be stationed nearby but out of sight in order to provide a capability for high level use of force if required. Perhaps most remarkably of all, however, the data suggest that the visibility of paramilitary style police was virtually zero throughout the tournament and that there were no major incidents of 'disorder' in match cities and only one England fan arrested for a violence related offence, despite the presence of approximately 150,000 England fans during the tournament. Indeed, the *Corpo de Intervenção* for Northern Portugal did not record a single circumstance where they were required to draw a baton for the entire tournament (including for the high risk fixture between the Netherlands and Germany). Thus, the evidence suggests that where a graded tactical approach is utilised there are fewer requirements to use police units who by their very purpose and training are likely to employ tactics involving indiscriminate force against crowds.

This research therefore demonstrates that during the tournament a form of graded tactical profile in line with the ESIM derived theoretical models of police good practice was successfully implemented. This approach was highly pro-active rather than laissez-faire, utilising a wide range of non-confrontational tactical options that allowed police to engage with fans at an early stage prior to any threat to public order. This meant that they were more capable of supporting perceptions of police legitimacy and effectively differentiating between those within the crowd who were and who were not posing a public order risk.

Data gathered from among England fans confirms that these tactics corresponded with widespread perceptions of police legitimacy. Perceptions that were punctuated by critical moments of 'self-policing' that helped in the prevention of any major incidents of 'disorder' in match cities despite the presence of 'hooligans'. In contrast, subjectively illegitimate policing, in areas outside of the PSP's jurisdiction was associated with the generation and escalation of conflict combined with the apparent empowerment of hooligan fans. Perhaps most strikingly, prior to the tournament the data suggests that strong identification as an England fan implied dissimilarity to police in match cities whereas following the tournament it implied similarity. The research therefore suggests that the experience of these policing tactics positively transformed a previously antagonist relationship between England fans and the police, perhaps over the longer term. This finding suggests that the route to successful public order outcomes may be via the creation of common bonds of social identification between crowd participants and the police that emerge during the crowd event itself as an outcome<sup>49</sup> of the perceived legitimacy of police tactics.

The widely recognised success of the PSP approach has also begun subsequently to impact upon policy at a European level. For example, in 2005, the Police Cooperation Working Party of the Council of the European Union adopted policies based upon this research as addendums to the European Union Handbook on International Police Cooperation and Measures to Prevent and

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<sup>49</sup> Stott, C.J., Adang, O.M., Livingstone, A., & Schreiber, M. (2008) Tackling Football Hooliganism: A Quantitative Study of Public Order, Policing and Crowd Psychology. *Psychology Public Policy and Law*. Vol. 14, No. 2, 115–141; Stott, C., Adang, O., Livingstone, A. & Schreiber, M. (2007) Variability in the collective behaviour of England fans at Euro2004: 'Hooliganism', public order policing and social change. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 75-100.

Control Violence and Disturbances in Connection with Football Matches with an International Dimension<sup>50</sup>. These relate specifically to the concept of 'dynamic risk assessment' (8241/05) and 'police tactical performance for public order management in connection with international football matches' (8243/05). This research and theory also form the scientific input to a proposed curriculum in a 4.7 million Euro bid from the United Kingdom Football Policing Unit, along with forty partners from twenty nine European States, to the European Commission to fund a Pan-European Police Training Programme for police officers involved in public order management at football matches with and international dimension.

*Implications for Policing Protest.*

There is now substantial evidence that a social identity approach to understanding crowd psychology and behaviour can be fruitful both theoretically and practically. The available evidence derived from the partnerships between science and police practice in the domain of football related public order policing therefore starts to build a very convincing empirical case for 1) the ESIM analysis of crowd dynamics and psychology and 2) police good practice. Accordingly, it is evident from the wider body of research that risks to public order are not just a feature of the crowds or those within them but can emerge from the dynamics of the events themselves; dynamics of which the police can and do play an integral role. The available research and theory suggests that the effective and efficient policing of protest crowds involves the proactive management of the crowd dynamics of legitimacy and power. While there is no universal panacea that can act as a national model within England and Wales there are clearly underlying principles that can be of use for those developing and implementing strategic and tactical models at a local level. In order to achieve this however, it is essential that the correct background theoretical understandings of crowds are in place among police.

It would appear that the most effective means of managing crowd dynamics is by ensuring that ongoing threat assessments are linked as closely as possible to graded, dynamic, specifically targeted, information led and rapid tactical deployments. Within police organisational structures within the U.K. it is evidently Bronze commanders that are best positioned to perform this function because they can adapt both the operational protocols and the tactical plan to meet the emergent risks. This would suggest that Bronze level autonomy is an important feature in allowing police tactics to adapt efficiently and effectively to the dynamics of risk that emerge during an operation itself. The research suggests that it is therefore important to empower Bronze commanders. But at the same time it is essential to train them with the necessary strategic competencies and theoretical knowledge regarding crowd dynamics<sup>51</sup>.

This tactical approach should also reflect a strategy of the facilitating fans' legitimate intentions and the early use of non-confrontational tactical options, such as communication and positive interpersonal interaction. Interacting with protestors during the event positively assists the police in risk assessment, the accurate targeting of their resources, developing channels for liaison and actively constructs views of police legitimacy in the wider crowd. In this respect it is also evident that there would be some benefit in developing the 'community policing' function, perhaps provided by

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<sup>50</sup> Police Cooperation Working Party of the Council of the European Union (2006) European Union Handbook on International Police Cooperation and Measures to Prevent and Control Violence and Disturbances in Connection with Football Matches with an International Dimension. Official Journal of the European Union (English Edition). 49, C32.

<sup>51</sup> Stott, C., Livingstone, A. and Hoggett, J. (2008).



special police units. It is not at this point clear who could provide such tactical capability but it is certainly already a feature of the U.K.'s foreign police delegations travelling abroad. For example, during the Football World Cup Finals in Germany in 2006 English uniform police were used to create an easily identifiable liaison and dialogue capability with English fans. Moreover, in Frankfurt during the visit of England fans to the city special units of German police were deployed as 'Communication Officers'. These police were observed successfully managing some very high risk crowd incidents in coordinated interventions with Bereitschaftspolizei<sup>52</sup>.

Perhaps the strongest example to date of good practice with regard to the development of a dialogue capability has occurred in the Stockholm County Police Department in Sweden. In Stockholm there were a series of protests very similar to the London G20 protest around the European Council meeting in Gothenburg in June, 2001. Around twenty five thousand people, including several 'Anarchist' organisations, took part in protests surrounding the event. The majority of these protests were peaceful but some were also extremely violent. As a consequence of a series of incidents a mass arrest of four hundred and fifty nine people took place, three demonstrators were injured by police gunfire and one hundred and fifty people, including fifty police officers, required hospital treatment. The police Commander was subsequently put on trial and acquitted over the decision to make the mass arrest but none the less the event became a critical incident for the Swedish Police. A subsequent official report led to the development of a common national tactical concept for policing crowds. The concept was informed by the ESIM and other research which identified the manner in which interactions between demonstrators and police were critical in terms of governing the processes of escalation and de-escalation.

As a consequence the Swedish National Police Board developed and began to implement the Special Police Tactic (SPT) nationally via training at the National Police Academy. The SPT is based around highly mobile units with protective equipment capable of working as together in a manner very similar to the Police Support Unit in the U.K. But the theoretical model underpinning the strategy recognises the importance of group interaction and is linked to the ESIM via training and pre-reading materials<sup>53</sup>. In addition, to the 'repressive' tactics reliant on the use of force the SPT also includes arrest squads and dialogue police. The dialogue police play an important function within the policing of crowd events but have an explicitly 'non-repressive' function. Dialogue police work in pairs and normally civilian clothes but are distinguishable by yellow bibs which display the words 'Dialogue Police'. Their primary role is to act as a communication link between demonstrators and police commanders. However, their goal is to avoid confrontation through genuine dialogue, communication, identifying potential risks to public order, the facilitation of protestors' legitimate intentions and to create self policing among the crowd.

Dialogue police were drawn in part from a background of being negotiators and some had experience of negotiation from peacekeeping missions in the Balkans. They carry many of these principles with them into their role in public order management. They work before during and after events to establish links to radical protest groups over extended period such that during events they know and are known to key figures within such groups. In effect, the dialogue police adopt a

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<sup>52</sup> See Stott, C & Pearson, G (2007) p238-297.

<sup>53</sup> The pre-read materials for command level training include Reicher et al (2004) Reicher, S., Stott, C., Drury, J, Adang, O., Cronin, P., & Livingstone, A. (2007) Knowledge-Based Public Order Policing: Principles and Practice. *Policing*, 1, 403-415., 2007) and Dr. Stott provides lectures for the public order training courses for the SPT held at the Swedish Police Academy.

‘community policing’ orientation to crowd participants. They are then able to build links of mediation and negotiation between police commanders and influential protesters during crowd events<sup>54</sup>. Moreover, since they understand and have points of contact with the groups they are able to assist both commanders and protestors by providing advice on and negotiating the potential impacts of different courses of action. Since their inception no information from dialogue police has ever been used in the conviction of anyone arrested during a crowd event.

Initially there was a great deal of hostility to the dialogue police from protestors but also from police colleagues. The non-repressive function along with not playing an ‘intelligence’ role (e.g. gathering information that would be used to compile intelligence files or secure prosecutions) assisted the dialogue units in gaining trust with protestors. Moreover, in order to maintain their links to protestors they would be required to acknowledge that the indiscriminate use of force by police was itself a factor increasing the levels of hostility. But given the defining roles and responsibilities of the police a common reaction from other officers was that the dialogue police had compromised themselves as police officers, taken the side of demonstrators, ‘gone soft’ and were in and of themselves a sign of police weakness. As such the dialogue units were initially ostracised as ‘traitors’ by colleagues. However, within a short period of time police commanders began to recognise that dialogue had positive effects in terms of reducing disorder and they are now an established and highly effective component of the Stockholm Police Department<sup>55</sup>.

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<sup>54</sup> Although it is important to recognise that influence processes are dependent upon circumstances.

<sup>55</sup> Holgersson, S (2009) *Dialogue Police: Experiences, Observations and Possibilities*. Stockholm: The Swedish National Police Board; Knutson, J. & Holgersson, S. (in press) *Dialogue policing – a means for less collective violence?* In T. Madensen & J. Knutsson (eds) *Crime Prevention Studies: Preventing Collective Violence*. Monsey, NY and Cullompton, Devon, UK: Criminal Justice Press and Willan Publishing.

### *Conclusions.*

It is evident from the research literature that during crowd events police use of force should be informed by the circumstances in which it takes place so as to avoid interventions directed at crowds or others who happen to be present in the vicinity of the incident. This use of force must be targeted only at those individuals who have brought about an incident *and* who have adopted aggressive and violent attitudes. It should not be exercised on the basis of a presumption that crowds pose a uniform threat to public order when only a small number within the crowd are judged to actually be posing risk. In this respect policing should be based upon the actual behaviour of individuals within the crowd but whole crowds should not then be subjected to the use of coercive force because groups within them seek to or have already transgressed limits of acceptable behaviour as defined by the police.

An important feature of the research is that it suggests that facilitating the peaceful intentions of crowds, avoiding the disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force and adopting and 'graded' tactical approach are effective because they increase the range of tactical options open to the police prior to the deployment of indiscriminate coercive force. This increased range of tactics seems to allow policing to move from the reactive controlling of 'public disorder' to the proactive management and maintenance of 'public order'. The research suggests that such proactive management is achieved through the maintenance of the perceived legitimacy of the intergroup relationships with, and thereby helping to create and maintain bonds of psychological identification between, police and crowd participants.

To achieve this it is necessary to inform police commanders more accurately concerning the scientific evidence and theory regarding crowd dynamics. It is also necessary to provide them with the tactical capability to negotiate and communicate with crowds so they are more able to create policing approaches within their immediate locus of command that avoid escalating the risk to public order. Where this approach is adopted a situation is more likely to emerge in which a) those within the crowd will perceive their intergroup relationships with the police as legitimate b) those seeking disorder are marginalised both physically and psychologically c) there is 'self policing' within the crowd and d) there will be overall reductions in the emergence, scale and intensity of disorder.

One of the central debates within the literature on public order policing is how best to achieve the avoidance of disproportionate use of police force within the policing of protest. Peter Waddington has consistently argued in favour of the use of paramilitary policing as a means of assisting in the maintenance of public order during protest events<sup>56</sup>. His contention is that the discipline, combined with the strong command and control, of paramilitary policing is effective at undermining tendencies that officers have to invoke disorder through uncoordinated and indiscriminate discretionary actions (e.g. such as officers 'lashing out' at protestors). Crucially, he also argues that paramilitary interventions against the crowd must be underpinned by information, such that the police are able to accurately target the use of force. In contrast, Jefferson<sup>57</sup> argues that paramilitary policing carries inherent dangers of precipitating and exacerbating collective violence. He proposes a four stage

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<sup>56</sup> P.A.J Waddington, 1987, 1991, 1993, 1994

<sup>57</sup> 1986, 1990.

process where police expectations of disorder can lead inevitably to disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by paramilitary police, a process through which widespread disorder emerges as a form of self fulfilling prophesy<sup>58</sup>.

The literature from crowd psychology tends to be consistent with the position of both Jefferson *and* that of Peter Waddington. In particular, the data and analysis arising from Euro2004 points toward the important role played by squads of standard and non-uniformed officers who were operating within crowds gathered in match cities. These officers were able to gather real time information on, and react quickly and sensitively to, any emerging sources of risk to 'public order'. That study also shows that large squads of riot police were present but being kept deliberately out of sight ready for rapid deployment. Thus, whilst the 'low profile' approach of the PSP may have avoided the obvious use of paramilitary police it still retained the capability to utilise them. But it was the early and proactive deployment of non-paramilitary police that appears to have increased the capacity for the PSP to engage the type of information led targeted use of force central to Peter Waddington's model. In other words, it was the deployment of non-paramilitary tactics, to locate and deal with emergent problems with dialogue or low level force in the first instance, which meant that 'public order' was maintained and that the paramilitary police – with their increased tendencies for the use of indiscriminate force - were hardly, if ever, required.

In this sense the central lesson from the scientific research is that there is a requirement within the U.K. to understand how to build upon the paramilitary tactics and formations that grew out of the major disturbances of the 1980's. The literature suggests that such development should focus upon how to unite the existing approach with a range of non-confrontational tactical options that do not rely upon but still work in tandem with police capacity for the coercive use or threat of force. It may well be that such tactics could be provided by PSU's themselves or by special squads that operate in similar formations to, but have fundamentally different roles from, Forward Intelligence Teams (FITs). But whatever tactical advances were chosen they would then need to be supported through the development of public order training. It will not be sufficient for such training to simply report upon the scientific knowledge. It will be necessary to integrate the implications of the science into all aspects of training at the level of strategy, tactics and operational practice. For example, it may be necessary to train Gold Commanders how to develop their overall strategic approach and Silver and Bronze commanders on how to coordinate the different tactical options during an event. It may also be useful to train PSU officers in skills of conflict management via techniques of verbal and nonverbal communication, in a manner similar to training currently provided to some police negotiators. But whatever advances are made it should be seen as self evident that in partnership with science and education a research capability should be developed such that any developments can be fully tested and the evidence fed directly back into police training and scientific knowledge as part of an ongoing strategy for the development of best practice.

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<sup>58</sup> see also Stott & Drury, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998a