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ELE 15B

A



«An Ardent Everton Supporter »
Black and white photograph (undated)

Desmond Norris, *The Soccer Tribe*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1981

B

The other coppers are lashing out and trying to nick some of the younger element, but they know they've fucked up and we're mobbing together and the cunts are on for a kicking. I want to laugh and shout because this is Tottenham. A fucking shit hole and the old bill don't put cameras down poor people's streets. They're only interested in protecting City wealth and the rich cunts in Hampstead and Kensington. Fuck the scum round here. There's no cameras this distance from the ground. No fucking chance. The old bill know they haven't got the numbers and there's no videotape deterrent. The road's jammed with traffic and we can see flashing lights further down the street blocked by buses. You couldn't ask for more.

There's a few seconds of quiet and everyone knows the score. We run towards the van and the coppers are shitting themselves. Even the sergeant leaves the kid alone. The boy murmurs to himself on the pavement. They've all got their numbers covered so there's no chance of identification and you know that any complaint you make against police brutality comes to nothing. They love football fans because they can do what they want. We're lower than niggers because there's no politician going to stand up for the rights of mainly white hooligans like us. And we don't want their help. We stand on our own feet. There's no easy place to hide. No Labour council protecting us because we're an ethnic minority stitched up by the system. No Tory minister to support our free market right to kill or be killed. The old bill are the scum of the earth. They're the shit of creation. Lower than niggers, Pakis, yids, whatever, because at least they don't hide behind a uniform. You may take the piss out of the bastards occasionally but you have some hidden respect somewhere.

But the old bill? Leave it out. We have the cunts in our sights. We pile in and the bastards don't have a chance. The sergeant takes the worst of it because he's all stripes and mouth and we've seen him batter the kid. Somehow he's worse because he's got a uniform and authority and we've been trained to respect uniforms and believe in the idea of justice. He shouts out as he sinks to the road, pulled to his feet by Black Paul, and a few of the Battersea mob take turns kicking him. His eyes are shut and bruised. Blood spews out of his nose. His head snaps back and opens up on broken glass. He's getting his reward and we're so frenzied we couldn't care less if he died.

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The sirens are louder and police vans mount the pavement. We move off. Another train has arrived at Seven Sisters spilling more people onto the pavement, the vast majority of football fans who hate violence. Content to sing songs and have a few pints. We're evil bastards in their eyes and it gives us a special position. We split up and leave the battered coppers and the old bill unload their vans and block the road, a few coppers going over to check their mates, the rest piling into the crowd fresh off the train. They tug the nearest blokes and start laying into them. We look back and they've got some kids under a bus stop, kicking them black and blue, and a black woman's screaming at them to stop, that they haven't done anything wrong. A copper turns and lays her out with a single punch. Calls her a fucking slag.

The old bill are going mad and there's a couple of thousand people along the road now, and they lose it and start fighting back, defending themselves, and that's how you get a riot going. It only takes a few of you to start things off and the old bill are so fucking thick they whip everyone up. There's a helicopter above and more coppers piling down the road. They've got their shields out and try to form a barricade as Chelsea move forward, covering the area, kids and older blokes joining in. It's paradise this. A great way to spend your Saturday afternoon.

John King, *The Football Factory* (1996)

(The old bill : the police)

C

I

Again, we must place this problem in its social context, for footballing disturbances were in the short term (as in the long) but one aspect of much broader issue of crowd behaviour. The violence at Brussels, earlier at other European venues and for some fifteen years on British grounds, has been primarily the work of or involving youths and young adults – their ages ranging in the main between 17 and 21 and from working-class origin.¹² It is this age group, or a slightly wider one, which has for a century and more been the object of a great deal of social concern, political disquiet and legal vigilance. It has been customary to isolate that age group between childhood and full manhood (for we are dealing with a masculine issue) as a distinctive 'problem'. Indeed, it was one of the early preoccupations of early psychology as a discipline in the early twentieth century to investigate the particular physical and mental ingredients of the adolescent. The very *concept* of adolescence was itself a function of political and psychological investigation into the behaviour of those boys and young men no longer at school nor yet fully integrated into the no less disciplined world of the work place, or their own family disciplines and restraints.¹³ Those forms of rebellious behaviour among adolescents which provoked regular outcries over the past century have normally been described as delinquency, with a consequent effort by the law and the police to control and eliminate them. In essence this was a pathological view of young adults which developed in large part because of the increasing influence of psychology, and which found its most important expression in the development of the British schooling system, most notably through the influence of the psychological work of Cyril Burt.¹⁴ Although much of that theory of human behaviour and development is known to be deeply flawed, this is not at issue. What matters is that for much of the twentieth-century British educational and penal policy towards adolescents has been based on a theory of human development, and entailing a consequent categorisation of age groups, which isolated young adults as a 'problem' group in need of special scrutiny, treatment and, in key areas, punishment.

II

Over the past generation, however, the intellectual tendency has been to reject this view – to discard the analysis of adolescence as a pathological condition – and instead to seek the explanations for the boisterousness and aggression of adolescents within the context of social class.¹⁵ It is at this point that the sociologists of modern Britain come to our help, and provide us with clues if not with answers to the behaviour of the young. If it is true that the behaviour of these age groups (or rather of some of them) derive from their immediate social and class context (though to phrase it thus seems to state a truism), we need to know what has happened to these working-class communities from whence they spring.

The 'street arabs' of late Victorian life, the adolescents of the early twentieth century, the more ritualised expressions of recent times – of Teds, Rockers, punks and others – all fall into a similar pattern, no matter how different their outward forms and behaviour. All were deeply disliked by outsiders (especially older outsiders), all were viewed, in part if not entirely, as a result of a troubled youthful frame of mind, and all were regarded as threatening forms of behaviour. This is not to say that the behaviour of these particular groups was unexceptional; there is a great deal of evidence to show that each of these youthful sub-cultures (to give them their more recently acquired sociological code) entailed a collective identity which often relied upon violent expression, in word and deed, to impress (especially on outsiders) the strength, the creed and the image of the group identity.

III

James Walvin, *Football and the Decline of Britain* (1986)

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ELE 16 B

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like that day in July, almost nine years back, when the beautiful men were cold. In typical summer weather, sticky and bright, Alice Manfred stood for three hours on Fifth Avenue marveling at the cold black faces and listening to drums saying what the graceful women and the marching men could not. What was possible to say was already in print on a banner that repeated a couple of promises from the Declaration of Independence and waved over the head of its bearer. But what was meant came from the drums. It was July in 1917 and the beautiful faces were cold and quiet; moving slowly into the space the drums were building for them.

I

During the march it seemed to Alice as though the day passed, the night too, and still she stood there, the hand of the little girl in her own, staring into each cold face that passed. The drums and the freezing faces hurt her, but hurt was better than fear and Alice had been frightened for a long time—first she was frightened of Illinois, then of Springfield, Massachusetts, then Eleventh Avenue, Third Avenue, Park Avenue. Recently she had begun to feel safe nowhere south of 110th Street, and Fifth Avenue was for her the most fearful of all. That was where whitemen leaned out of motor cars with folded dollar bills peeping from their palms. It was where salesmen touched her and only her as though she were part of the goods they had condescended to sell her; it was the tissue required if the management was generous enough to let you try on a blouse (but no hat) in a store. It was where she, a woman of fifty and independent means, had no surname. Where women who spoke English said, "Don't sit there, honey, you never know what they have." And women who knew no English at

II

III

30 all and would never own a pair of silk stockings moved away from her if she sat next to them on the trolley.

Now, down Fifth Avenue from curb to curb, came a tide of cold black faces, speechless and unblinking because what they meant to say but did not trust themselves to say the drums said for them, and what they had seen with their own eyes and through the eyes of others the drums described to a T. The hurt hurt her, but the fear was gone at last. Fifth Avenue was put into focus now and so was her protection of the newly orphaned girl in her charge.

40 From then on she hid the girl's hair in braids tucked under, lest whitemen see it raining round her shoulders and push dollar-wrapped fingers toward her. She instructed her about deafness and blindness—how valuable and necessary they were

45 in the company of whitewomen who spoke English and those who did not, as well as in the presence of their children. Taught her how to crawl along the walls of buildings, disappear into doorways, cut across corners in choked traffic—how to do anything, move anywhere to avoid a whiteboy over the age of eleven. Much of this she could effect with her dress, but as the girl grew older, more elaborate specifications had to be put in place. High-heeled shoes with the graceful straps across the arch, the vampy hats closed on the head with saucy brims framing the face, makeup of any kind—all of that was outlawed in Alice Manfred's house. Especially the coats slung low in the back and not buttoned, but clutched, like a bathrobe or a towel around the body, forcing the women who wore them to look like they had just stepped out of the bathtub and were already ready for bed.

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©Gordon Parks

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Gordon Parks. *Ethel Shariff in Chicago's Gelatin silver print, 1957.*

(NB: Ethel Shariff was the leader of the Muslim Sisters, i.e. the women's corps of the Black Muslims, and daughter of Elijah Muhammad, the spiritual leader of the Black Muslim movement.)

C

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ELE 16 B

A ship lost at sea for many days suddenly sighted a friendly vessel. From the mast of the unfortunate vessel was seen a signal, "Water, water; we die of thirst!" The answer from the friendly vessel at once came back, "Cast down your bucket where you are." A second time the signal, "Water, water; send us water!" ran up from the distressed vessel, and was answered, "Cast down your bucket where you are." And a third and fourth signal for water was answered, "Cast down your bucket where you are." The captain of the distressed vessel, at last heeding the injunction, cast down his bucket, and it came up full of fresh, sparkling water from the mouth of the Amazon Rivèr. To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land or who underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the Southern white man, who is their next-door neighbour, I would say: "Cast down your bucket where you are"—cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom we are surrounded.

Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. And in this connection it is well to bear in mind that whatever other sins the South may be called to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world, and in nothing is this Exposition more eloquent than in emphasizing this chance. Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labour and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and the substantial, the ornamental

gewgaws of life and the useful. No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities.

To those of the white race who look to the incoming of those of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits for the prosperity of the South, were I permitted I would repeat what I say to my own race, "Cast down your bucket where you are." Cast it down among the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your firesides. Cast down your bucket among these people who have, without strikes and labour wars, tilled your fields, cleared your forests, builded your railroads and cities, and brought forth treasures from the bowels of the earth, and helped make possible this magnificent representation of the progress of the South. Casting down your bucket among my people, helping and encouraging them as you are doing on these grounds, and to education of head, hand, and heart, you will find that they will buy your surplus land, make blossom the waste places in your fields, and run your factories. While doing this, you can be sure in the future, as in the past, that you and your families will be surrounded by the most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen. As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past, in nursing your children, watching by the sick-bed of your mothers and fathers, and often following them with tear-dimmed eyes to their graves, so in the future, in our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defence of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one. In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.