



## How Do I Love Thee? The England National Team and the Lovemark

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...we are never so defenceless against suffering as when we love, never so helplessly unhappy as when we have lost our loved object or its love. (Freud, 1930: 82)

What are we doing when we do something *in the name of love*? Why is it assumed to be better to do the same thing if it is done *out of love*? (Ahmed, 2004: 124, emphasis in original)

I can't pinpoint the exact time when the flags went up – probably close to the commemorations of the Normandy landings. But if the cross of St George emerged to acknowledge the contribution of a passing generation, the flags not only remained after the services but germinated all over our city with the advent of Euro 2004 a few days later. At first, I thought this symbolised the kind of patriotism associated with places like Portsmouth: old cities with centuries-old associations with the armed forces and the particular mentality that deeply rooted connection generates. But it seemed that this demonstration of support and fervent hope was not just confined to this city but was being replicated throughout England.

As it turned out, it wasn't a local quirk. It was happening all over the country...a friend in London excitedly rang...to tell me he had been overtaken by a car sporting a flag in each window, two mounted on broomsticks thrust through the sunroof and a massive Three Lions badge on the bonnet...he had a suspicion it might have something to do with the bloke on his estate who painted his roof – and his lawn – with the cross of St George. (Needham, 2004: 24)

Truly, this was love – love unconfined, unabashed and unafraid to say its name.

For Saatchi and Saatchi global CEO, Kevin Roberts, this manifestation of attachment is evidence of a Lovemark being bestowed upon the England side (Roberts, 2004). For him and his organisation, there is now a high degree of similarity in terms of quality of goods and services produced by contemporary organisations. Therefore, the distinguishing factor determining their success will increasingly depend on the ways in which they engender a genuine emotional connection. His concept of the Lovemark relates to the nature of this appeal and its core components: mystery, sensuality and intimacy. Examples cited of familiar Lovemarks range from the iconic cars of Ferrari to more everyday consumables like Marmite with the nature of a product's appeal being capable of analysis through its location on the love/respect axis. Goods and services having low love, low respect ratings are situated as commodities, with those possessing

low respect and high love as fads. High respect, low love products are termed brands, with only those being high in love and high in respect gaining the prestigious status of Lovemarks (Roberts, 2004: 146-149). One of the main Lovemarks in the UK arguably applies to the national sport, football, and in particular to the English national team, which despite decades of underachievement still engenders powerful feelings of emotional commitment amongst football supporters – a loyalty beyond reason – the hallmark of a genuine Lovemark ([www.Lovemarks.com](http://www.Lovemarks.com)).<sup>1</sup>

However, this example of attachment to the English national team illustrates the problematic nature of this concept, rooted in Roberts' (2004) conceptualisation of love: perceiving this emotion as being inherently positive and positively transformational. The critical case utilised here will illustrate how this form of love is certainly visible, but that there is a more problematic form of the emotion co-existing here – one that is intertwined with this 'legitimate' form of love – but is markedly different; represented by spectator disorder, the football hooligan and the persisting (but diminishing) allegiance of far right political groups to the national team.

This review offers a critique of the Lovemark through an analysis of two forms and expressions of love displayed towards the England team. This will utilise a largely psychoanalytic reading of love (e.g. Freud, 1922, 1930; Klein, 1952) offering a more ambivalent assessment of this emotion as well as the work of Ahmed (2004) concerning the cultural politics of emotion. Her analysis converges with this study both through the use of Freud and via her focus on tracking the cultural significance of the use of 'love' and the ways by which right wing, fascist groups seek to shift their representation as 'hate groups' by converting that hate into love and protection of the country. Thus there is a resonance with fictional and non-fictional accounts of following England that perceive certain behaviours as being demonstrations of love of country and the reassertion of a lost national identity. Some implications for those who seek to protect and prosper from the England team's Lovemark are then discussed.

## Hillsborough and Hypercommodification

For those charged with protecting the image and the 'marque' of the national game, the form of love attached to the game over the past twenty-five years – described by Crabbe as "the embodiment of an unrepentant nationalistic 'Englishness'...systematically and negatively associated with aggressive masculinity, drunkenness, open displays of nationalism, xenophobia and racism" (2004: 63) – ruptures the carefully constructed football 'product' developed in the wake of the Hillsborough stadium disaster and the

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1 Whilst Saatchi and Saatchi are part of the Publicis Groupe – an amalgamation of similar agencies to SandS plus media-buy organisations – Publicis would not exploit the concept of Lovemarks because it 'belongs' to Saatchi. Therefore, the other member organisations would want to develop their own singular proposition(s) for their clients. This means that the uptake of the Lovemark model depends on Saatchi convincing their clients such as Procter and Gamble, Toyota, General Mills etc. that by using this concept, they will improve sales and market share. Hence, the key is to convince *Saatchi* clients of the veracity of the Lovemark approach rather than 'sell' it via promulgation through Publicis.

restructuring of the game in the 1990s. This restructuring was facilitated by the advent of satellite TV and exponential increases from TV rights income, and a *hypercommodification* of the sport (Giulianotti, 2002). If commodification “is not a single process but an ongoing one, often involving the gradual entry of market logic to the various elements that constitute the object or social practice under consideration”, then “the marked intensification of this process in recent years is of a different order to that which was experienced up until the late 1980s, and so might now be described as a period of hypercommodification” (Giulianotti, 2002: 27).

Such developments within the market and marketing of football have been strongly rooted in a presentation of the game that stresses its inclusivity and the increasing diversity of supporters in terms of age, colour, ethnic orientation and gender. Thus highlighting football’s ability to bring all sections of the community together via their shared desire for the game and the feelings of belonging experienced when following one’s team. Recently this has been epitomised by former England player, Sir Bobby Charlton in an advertisement for MasterCard during the Euro 2004 championships: ‘England united – priceless’.

Since the early 1990s developments within the football industry have seen the intertwining of key ‘coincidences of interest’ (Williams, 1999; 2003) with the broader, contemporary condition of ‘disorganised capitalism’ (Lash and Urry, 1987). At the heart of these ‘coincidences of interest’ was a struggle to fill the vacant leadership role in the game noted by Lord Justice Taylor (1990) in his report following the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster. This saw an alliance being created between two powerful parties who sought to fill that role: the game’s governing body, the Football Association (FA) – which sought to maintain and extend its dominance of the game – and the (then) First Division Chairmen seeking alteration in the financial structuring of the sport (and by implication a new league). But whilst the main outcome of this uneasy alliance was the formation of the FA Premier League in 1993, another significant driver for the Premiership was the need to place the *national* team and its particular needs at the heart of this new league and of the national game (Fynn and Guest, 1994).<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the national team and its significance need to be located within wider changes occurring within football during the past decade. This has involved a social realignment of the sport coupled with a decision taken by the FA and major clubs to focus on a more affluent consumer segment (The Football Association, 1991). Using highly sophisticated marketing and media-led methodologies to exploit a resurgence of interest in the game, the result has been the generation of diverse and extraordinary volumes of capital entering the sport from entirely new sources such as TV rights moneys, the Internet and telecommunications corporations, transnational sports equipment manufacturers, public relations companies and the major stock markets through the sale of club equity.

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2 At this point it is interesting to point out that a relationship thread of some longevity exists between Saatchi and Saatchi and the FA. Alex Fynn being a Saatchi advisor to the FA during the formation of the Premiership and another, Adam Crozier becoming its Chief Executive. Additionally, Kevin Roberts’ consulting partner, Clive Gilson was acting as a consultant to the FA when it recruited current England Manager, Sven Goran Eriksson.

Simultaneously, a new set of social and cultural relations arose during this period: seeing the greater immigration of elite, overseas football players to the English game, the gradual proliferation of continental and global competitions, the huge rise in the salaries of many football players – even in the lower leagues, new media outlets for sports (e.g. satellite TV, club TV, the Internet and the new generation of mobile phones) and new forms of cultural encoding seen in these media (Giulianotti, 2002). These new forms of encoding hinge around the personalities, attainments and the bodies of key figures; utilising them and the lifestyles of the international playing elite who frequently operating as powerful signifiers of class, nationality, politics, gender, bordered and borderless lives (Wong and Trumper, 2002). It is against this backdrop that we have seen the rise of superstar players such as David Beckham (the current England captain) and, more recently, Manchester United player, Wayne Rooney.

## And The England Team

Over the past decade, these new forms of cultural encoding of football have seen further developments in the ways in which it is reported and represented across the media. Certain events, matches and players now attain a symbolism that extends beyond the confines of the sport with players and managers involved within such events being subjected to a degree of representational manipulation that is unparalleled and, is often outside the control of players, their clubs or their governing bodies (Gilmore, 2004; Maguire et al, 1999). This ‘manipulation’ of national sporting events and sports people is successful in engaging emotion – in the present case, love – because, as acknowledged by Weiss, sport is shaped by and derives symbolic significance from its close links with society.

With its classic, socioculturally valid and transparent norms, it forms a social subsystem in which different types of identity reinforcement can be found through...a sports performance; or it can be experienced vicariously as sport spectator. (Weiss, 2001: 393)

For him, in modern societies there is no other social subsystem that gives so many people, regardless of their religion, gender, age or social or educational level, access to a system of social validation and acknowledgement by others. Arguably the sports media are aware of this and exploit such social validation and the feelings sports performances can and do engender in those who watch and follow a sport or a particular event. This is demonstrated in Garland’s (2004) analysis of the English tabloid press coverage of the 2002 World Cup Finals and Maguire *et al*’s (1999) analysis of the same concerning the England v Germany match in Euro 1996. Whilst covering different tournaments in markedly different parts of the world, both analyses show how the tabloids used wartime nostalgia in an attempt to draw upon the ‘fighting’ characteristics that are seen to be inherently English and intertwined football coverage with that of the news and current affairs – providing interesting contextual material in which to analyse how notions of national identity were being articulated. Although the coverage of the 2002 World Cup Finals did not reach the “xenophobic, chauvinistic and jingoistic gutter journalism” shown by some sections of the tabloid press during Euro ’96 (National Heritage Select Committee, 1996: 1, cited in Garland, 2004: 81), Garland illustrates how a new, more inclusive Englishness was evolving amongst England supporters. An

Englishness that was not reflected in relevant tabloid coverage where a narrower focus prevailed rooted in a more nostalgic sense of national identity.

This suggests that notions of Englishness are evolving, with Crabbe (2004: 71-72) arguing that the 2002 World Cup Finals saw a symbolic decoupling of Englishness from a tabloid articulation of it. The latter being located within an exaltation of assimilationist sentiment by defining Englishness within a pageant of white nationalism. Thus, the advent of the flags during Euro 2004 seemed to indicate that the attempts of the FA and the UK Home Office to re-market the image of England supporters in order to create a more socially inclusive supporter base might have persuaded even the more reticent English middle classes to put aside their squeamishness concerning their national team:

By wearing this flag I would like to show my support for the England team but: 1. Wholeheartedly reject any connotations of xenophobic nationalism; 2. Dissociate myself from anyone who removes his shirt in public; 3. Salute the rich contribution made by my Celtic cousins to British life; 4. Reaffirm my commitment to the European Social Chapter. (Needham, 2004: 24)

Thus suggesting that there was evidence that greater inclusivity was experienced and expressed when supporting the national squad, Needham cites the poignant story of journalist and writer Sarfraz Manzoor; showing that it had taken him 30 years to be able to buy an England shirt without fear of resentment or mockery.

That night, as Asians, blacks and whites joined together...I remember thinking: this is what patriotism could be like if we could defang it of its nastier elements. (*ibid.*)

And as the re-development of Wembley Stadium forced the national side to play its international matches – competitive and friendly – away from the capital and in a variety of Premiership grounds, access to England matches increased (funds permitting).

More recently, a culture has emerged of watching such matches on big screen TV in local pubs and bars, arguably facilitating and replicating (albeit on a smaller scale) the emotional climate and experience of watching live matches. With greater confidence being expressed concerning the short and long-term abilities of domestic players, coupled with the advent of more intimate, local settings for national games, it could be argued that the England national team's Lovemark status is confirmed. But it could equally be stated that it has always had that status in the hearts of the football public and beyond – especially since 1966 and England's win over Germany in the World Cup Final at Wembley.<sup>3</sup>

Lovemarks are, by definition, top of their class for the people who love them. The passion for a Lovemark can be intense. At the far end of the scale people will lay down their lives for a Lovemark. In fact, nations may well be some of the most powerful Lovemarks of them all. (Roberts, 2004: 75)

But there is another side...

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3 Roberts' (2004) examples of Lovemarks include a wide variety of goods, people, experiences etc. that have existed and have been the object of love, affection and desire for many years. It therefore seems as if Roberts is engaged in a form of post-hoc activity, appropriating iconic moments and figures through the award of Lovemark status and their presentation through this lens.

## Disenfranchisement and Identification

Unsurprisingly there is an increasing desire amongst political and administrative authorities concerned with the management of the game to extend this sense of transformation witnessed in the popularity and cultures of support pervading the domestic leagues to the national team.

A significant element of the English FA's concern to extend this transformation to the cultures of support which surround the national team was driven by a desire to prevent forms of disruptive behaviour which were seen as highly media sensitive and damaging to the game's public image and commercial appeal. (Crabbe, 2004: 65)

Whilst the Football (Disorder) Act 2000 aimed to restrict football hooliganism (with the main focus being the international sphere), the FA launched *englandfans* on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2001. Aiming to renew the England Members Club, its publicity materials aimed to evoke nostalgia for football as a family game – showing images that were family oriented, but also contained some representations of ethnic diversity. Thus, the combination of legal banning orders and *englandfans* have the ability to restrict access to tickets to those regarded by both the FA and the police as undesirable or *potentially* dangerous.<sup>4</sup> Whilst the focus on broadening the appeal of football to a wider constituency is laudable, as noted by Crabbe (2004) the formal controls being exerted here seek to exclude those with criminal convictions – be they football related or not. It is therefore arguable as to whether such initiatives are truly transformational or simply managerial. Following Crabbe again, it is possible to apply a Foucauldian reading (1979) and see 'the family' becoming a rhetorical instrument of government through its symbolic invocation. It is therefore interesting to juxtapose an alternative, arguably 'excluded' sensibility against these developments – as seen in the burgeoning football hooligan literature and the release of the film 'The Football Factory' at the start of the European Championship. Whilst this is a fictional account of the life of a seasoned Chelsea hooligan, and a 'core text' in this genre (e.g. King, 1999; Ward, 1998) its release coincided with police warnings of a rise in soccer violence, and the arrival of a so-called new breed of teenage hooligan being used as 'foot soldiers' by older men engaged in organising pre- and post-match fights (Goodchild, 2004). Indeed, pre-season coverage in the UK has increasingly noted the gradual rise in football-related violence connected with league and cup games.

However, despite stringent attempts to curb its occurrence overseas during international competitions that involve the national squad, this demonstration of a love of country persists – and is also continually represented in fictional and non-fictional accounts of following England (King, 1999; Brimson and Brimson, 1996; Brimson, 2000). Such enactments and representations are ones the UK's criminal justice system and the FA would like to eradicate because such disorder inevitably inspires memories of the malaise in the game in the 1980s – one which saw the game blighted by "routinised

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4 Over 2,000 banning orders were in place in the UK for Euro 2004, thus preventing foreign travel and match attendance for those concerned.

problems of serious spectator disorder” (Williams, 1996: 4) – and as such, this kind of love is an unwanted blemish on the ‘marque’ of the national team and English football.<sup>5</sup>

Following England is all about pride and history. Our place in the pecking order. For centuries we’ve been kicking shit out of the Europeans. They start something and we finish it. We’re standing on the White Cliffs of Dover singing COME AND HAVE A GO IF YOU THINK YOU’RE HARD ENOUGH...I’m proud to be English and proud to say so. (King, 1999: 23, emphasis in original)

But for many football supporters, the re-orientation of the game towards a more affluent sector of the English public has effectively left them disenfranchised, with few being able to afford or gain access to tickets to important England matches. For some, the alteration in the ways in which support is enacted and displayed is experienced as dismayed alienation from a game they feel they no longer own – yet are expected (nay *required*) to continually finance as a means of appropriately demonstrating their love – or move elsewhere – to celebrate it should they fail to adhere to the new norms and circuits of consumption and civility.

Just what the fuck is going on?...there does seem to be a rather large number of blokes walking around with inflatable clogs on their heads and others with their faces painted all sorts of colours...to me, dressing up like a complete prick is not part of going to football...these people had tickets and were keeping the real fans away...They should be banned from football, not encouraged...We’re in danger of losing our game to these wankers and I think it is the duty of every England fan to tell these prats to grow up, get a life or fuck off. (Brimson and Brimson, 1996: 136)

It is therefore unsurprising that there is resistance to the experience of these ‘soft’ disciplinary mechanisms now expected as part of demonstrating love.

The FA must love their designer fans, just the image they wanted the world to see: your average face-painting, fun-loving, boy-meets-girl, loves-football, go-every-week English fan. (*ibid.*)

Given this example, we could see love as means of bonding with others in relation to an ideal (Ahmed, 2004: 124). But this ideal has two forms: one form of the ideal taking shape as an outcome of the processes outlined above which partially illustrate the means by which this bonding and formation of an ideal are encouraged by key stakeholders in the England ‘marque’. An alternative would consist of a process of alignment linked to nostalgia for the ‘traditional’ patterns of following England (indeed, following *football* itself during this period) prior to the changes ushered in by the Taylor Report (1990). Love here therefore becomes a crucial means by which individuals become aligned with collectives – independent and ‘official’ club supporters associations, web sites, fanzines – through their identification with this (lost) ideal. But this form of alignment arguably relies upon the existence of others who have *failed* that ideal or (as in the instance cited by Brimson and Brimson above) have debased it through engagement with processes of commercialisation. But whilst many supporters would find much to agree with in King’s quote below, only a minority would engage in the forms of action outlined in

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5 Returning to the past is a problematic state because of the tensions caused by divergent conceptualisations of what that past represents and signifies to football stakeholders – especially supporters.

graphic detail in 'England Away' as a means of asserting love, a form that has been exploited and enjoyed by elements of the English far right.

The architects have made the grounds sterile and the seats have killed the atmosphere...they've mixed everyone in together and you're not going to be singing your songs if you're next to a granny or some bloke with his kids. It's in the media and business side of things that the trendies have cashed in...But Billy's songs are good. It's the humour and the situation. ONE BOMBER HARRIS. (King, 1999: 56)

Whilst I do not want to make too much of this shared space or align the far right too closely with disenfranchised fans (most of whom would hold groups like Combat 18, the National Front and the British National Party in abhorrence) Ahmed's (2004) analysis is helpful here as it "proceeds by reading texts that circulate in the public domain, which work by aligning subjects with collectives by attributing 'others' as the 'source' of our feelings". Her work, and the use of psychoanalytic theory, facilitates an explanation not only of this process of bonding in relation to an ideal, but the experiences engendered by loss. As an additional explanation, the work of Klein (1952) facilitates an illustration of the inherent ambivalence of love, so in these ways, psychoanalysis provides some explanations of love which facilitate a critique of Roberts' current conceptualisation of the Lovemark.

## The Cultural Politics of Love: Group Identities and Loss

For Freud, love is central to the formation of groups and that groups are formed through their shared orientation towards an object. More specifically groups are formed when "the individual gives up his ego ideal and substitutes for it the group ideal as embodied in the leader" (Freud, 1921: 129). Thus, within a group setting, the bond relies on the transference of love to a leader, whereby the transference<sup>6</sup> becomes the common quality of the group. Whilst maintaining that the aim of love is sexual union, he also argues that other loves, whilst diverted from this aim, share the same libidinal energy that pushes the subject towards the loved object. Put simply, groups are formed through their shared orientation towards an object – obviously in this scenario that shared orientation concerns football; locally through allegiance to one's club and through consistently following the sport in an engaged, direct way – as demonstrated through club and national team support via *attendance* at matches; through enactment in traditional, routine rituals that generally denote 'typical', dedicated supporter behaviour.

[An] ecstasy (of support) is produced by the communal practice of singing and supporting the team. However, those communal practices are not only staged in the ground. The pub is also a crucial site of the creation of masculine solidarity. In the steam and inebriated atmosphere of the pub before the game, the lads first thought is to re-create their sense of mutual solidarity, which (sometimes) reaches its height in the ground. (King, 1998: 151)

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6 Transference is a process in the therapeutic relationship whereby the patient transfers childhood wishes, feeling, fantasies and modes of behaviour onto the analyst (Sandler *et al.*, 1992). As Gabriel notes (1999: 310), it generally involves positive and negative feeling and has resonance within an organizational setting as it is likely to affect relations between subordinates and superiors

The question here is what happens when that object is lost? Here, Freud shows how the ego can assume the characteristics of the lost object of love through introjection.<sup>7</sup> In plainer terms, the loss of the object is compensated for by ‘taking on’ the quality of the object. Thus, those who feel a profound sense of loss connected to the changing ways by which support for England are demonstrated could ‘take on’ what they perceive to be ‘qualities of the object’ they have lost (i.e. their sense of ownership of football and of the national team). Mourning and grief therefore become expressions of love with love announcing itself most passionately when faced with and experiencing the loss of the object (Freud, 1917). Hence the powerful emotions gendered in Taylor’s interviewee who mourns the loss of his club:

Anyone with a thought in their head and a sense of history can see and feel the deleterious changes affecting football...a one-time Liverpool fan, active since childhood told me: ‘the link has been severed. I’ve lost the love...the feeling that the team needs me and that they won’t succeed unless I’m here’. (Taylor, 1997: 38-9)

As Ahmed notes, “the impossibility that love can reach its object may also be what makes love powerful as a narrative” (2004: 130), which has interesting implications for Lovemarks because this impossibility or issue of difficulty in attaining the Lovemarked product is a highly risky strategy. Whilst it might work for high-end products and services, those are rare marques, which we might be prepared to wait for – as Roberts illustrates (Roberts, 2004: 140). But, returning to the main theme here, whilst at one level love takes the form of reciprocity; it is also an emotion that lives with the failure of that demand and can often do so through an intensification of its affect.<sup>8</sup> So, love might then work to bind people together in the *absence* of the loved object, even when that object is ‘the nation’ or by extension here, the England national team (Ahmed, 2004: 130). Thus, the sense of abandonment and rejection experienced by those who follow England and have been disenfranchised from that activity (for whatever reason) might actually *increase* their investment in the team.

The subject ‘stays with’ the nation, despite the absence of return and the threat of violence, as leaving would mean recognising that the investment of the national love over a lifetime has brought no value...one keeps loving rather than recognising that the love that one has given has not and will not be returned’. (Ahmed, 2004: 131)

In this sense, love is a form of waiting. And the longer the period of waiting, the more one has invested in terms of time, labour and energy the more has been expended. The failure of return here therefore extends the investment. As Ahmed states, “If love functions as the promise of return, then the extension of investment through the failure of investment through the failure of return works to maintain the ideal though its deferral into the future” (*ibid.*). But, this process might also require an explanation for this failure otherwise hope would turn into despair or ‘giving up’ on the lost object. Thus, those who have made the kinds of investments in the England team (following Ahmed), require an explanation as to why their cherished object of the highest levels of

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7 Introjection is being used here in the Kleinian sense (and is sometimes referred to as introjective identification) that denotes a process of taking an external object into the ego or self.

8 The term ‘affect’ or ‘charge of affect’ refers to the investment of memory, thought, wish or phantasy with emotion (Sandler *et al.*, 1997: 42).

team success has not been ‘returned’ since 1966. Arguably, it is the role of key individuals and authorities to provide an answer as fans continue to demand its return; focusing their anger and frustration on those perceived to be withholding it. Hence the increasing concern over the internal running of the English FA because they are perceived as being a major force concerning the commercialisation of the sport as well as having a high degree of responsibility for the England team. The fictional and non-fiction hooligan literature referred to earlier seems to mirror Ahmed’s process: providing explanations for their disenfranchisement and outlining the main obstacles to restoration with the object of their loving investment. But, as will be argued, this process requires an obstacle for its continued existence.

Using the accounts of love on the Stormfront web site as an example, Ahmed shows that for this group, the nation as lost object has been taken away and the impact of that theft must be repeated as a means of confirming love for the nation. Where this particular example is concerned, the fantasy of the return of this love *requires an obstacle*:

the racial others become the obstacle that allows the white subject to sustain a fantasy that without them the good life would be attainable, or their love would be returned with reward and value. (*ibid.*)

Thus, the failure of return is ‘explained’ by the presence of others who are *needed* in order for the investment to be sustained. The reliance on the other as the origin of injury becomes an ongoing investment in the failure of return. As outlined previously, the ‘other’ here can be defined as the interconnected stakeholders in the development and commercialisation of the England marque: the FA, corporate sponsors and those who ‘feed’ off the sport in order to provide information and entertainment services to a football public (press, media etc); those who have had a central role in creating and being sustained by the processes of hypercommodification. Additionally, Ahmed shows how the narratives promulgated by such far-right and fascist organisations re-orient themselves as ‘love groups’: “*Because we love, we hate, and this hate is what brings us together*” (2004: 43, emphasis in original). Such an argument resonated with fiction and non-fictional demonstrations of love within the hooligan literature – as illustrated below. With the enactment of violence on opposition fans abroad being perceived as a means of illustrating love of country; of reasserting a national supremacy abroad that has seemingly been eroded by European integration – whilst simultaneously mourning its loss and identifying those who provide an obstacle for its resurgence.

Harris is already in Amsterdam and the word going round is that Berlin is going to be major. It’s all there at the right time because you’re not going to find many blokes on this trip who agree with the way England’s being ripped apart by Europe. None of us wants to be ordered around by Berlin. That’s what the last war was about. It’s all big business and laws coming in through the back door. Not that I believe in our legal system being the best in the world because that’s bollocks. Anyone who’s dealt with the English legal system knows that it’s run by the rich, for the rich. (King, 1999: 13)

## Love and Ambivalence

Within the psychoanalytic domain, the emotion of love is hugely important, and the discussion here is necessarily curtailed and has been (somewhat arbitrarily) restricted to Freudian accounts, coupled with those of Klein. Having utilised Freud's explanations of group formation and their application to this case, it is useful to continue with this analysis because it also provides a challenge to Roberts' conceptualisation of love through its definition of it as essentially ambivalent in nature: showing that we can love and hate the same object; indeed, that there is no love without the accompaniment of hate.

As Freud stated within 'Civilization and its Discontents', one of the means by which we could avoid suffering (and some people do) is to make love the centre of every aspect of our lives (Freud, 1930: 82). But whilst Freud notes the important role played by this emotion in our pursuit of happiness, he acknowledges that it also makes us vulnerable to the loss of love and to our dependence upon another – someone who is 'not me' and who has the ability to take love away. Thus, at the height of being in love "the boundary between ego and object threatens to melt away...a man who is in love declares that 'I' and 'you' are one, and is prepared to behave as if it were a fact" (Freud, 1930: 66). For Klein, such a borderless identification would have resonance with an infant's attachment to the breast coupled with early feelings of omnipotence – and whilst the elucidation of her work here might seem somewhat disconnected from the narrative created so far, the processes have interesting applications to the England team.

Through her observations with children, Klein claimed that there is in the unconscious a fear of annihilation of life. She states,

I would also think that if we assume the existence of a death instinct, we must also assume that in the deepest layers of the mind there is a response to this instinct in the form of fear of annihilation of life. Thus in my view the danger arising from the inner working of the death instinct is the first cause of anxiety. (Klein, 1952: 29)

To this contributes the fact that the ego turns destructive impulses against this primary object. The young infant feels that frustration by the breast, implying a danger to life, is the retaliation for his destructive impulses towards it and the frustrating breast is persecuting him. So, the first form of anxiety is of a persecutory nature – and is connected to the first object of love, which it splits into a good, loving, nourishing breast and a bad, persecuting one. These processes of splitting are accompanied by projection and introjection whereby the infant projects destructive impulses onto the breast, deflecting the death instinct outwards, and in this way the attacked breast becomes an external representative of the death instinct. This 'bad' breast is also introjected and this therefore intensifies the internal danger situation – the fear of the activity of the death instinct within. The introjection of the bad breast therefore involves the introjection of the portion of the death instinct that had been deflected outwards and the ego attaches its fear of its own destructive impulses to the internal bad object.

"Come on England," one yelled as he urged his compatriots to charge a police barricade. "You're a traitor, you're meant to be one of us," a fan spat as he pushed and shoved a photographer. "Wherever you go, I'm going to follow you and twat you," said another. (Lister, 4004: 9)

But this activity of the death instinct deflected outwards as well as its working internally cannot be considered apart from the simultaneous operation of the activity of the life instinct. This attaches itself to the external object, the gratifying, (good) breast, which becomes the external representative of the life instinct. The introjection of this good object reinforces the power of the life instinct within. This good internalised breast, which is felt to be the source of life, forms a vital part of the ego and its preservation becomes an imperative need. Therefore, the introjection of this first loved object is inextricably linked with all the processes engendered by the life instinct. The good internalised breast and the bad, devouring breast form the core of the super ego in its good and bad aspects; they are the representatives within the ego of the struggle between the life and death instincts. Klein termed this the paranoid-schizoid position. So, the love experienced here is fundamentally ambivalent and her experience and conceptualisation of early infant emotional processes are undoubtedly bleak.

But, more hopefully, from the beginning of life, the ego tends towards integrating itself and towards synthesising different aspects of the object – an expression of the life instinct. Ultimately these processes of integration become more frequent and lasting as development goes on and in such states, a measure of synthesis between love and hatred in relation to these part-objects comes about. This gives rise to depressive anxiety, guilt and the desire to make reparation to the injured loved object. Within this depressive position the infant perceives and introjects the mother increasingly as a complete person, implying a fuller identification and more stable relationship with her. Whilst the focus here is predominately on the mother at this point, the infant's relation to the father and others people within its environment also undergo a similar change. Thus, the splitting processes diminish in strength and are predominately related to whole objects, as opposed to the part objects of the paranoid-schizoid position.

What facilitates this process of integration is:

the individual's feeling that integration implies being alive, loving and being loved by the internal and good object. (Klein, 1952: 312)

Thus, we eventually attain a state of synthesis. However, returning to Klein's arguments concerning the struggle between the life and death instincts, she states that *this struggle persists throughout life*. Hence the lengthy exposition of the infant internal processes outlined here, because this source of anxiety is never eliminated and enters as a perpetual factor in all anxiety-provoking situations. This has interesting implications not only for the love at the heart of the Lovemark and its location within our most primal of experiences where love is essentially ambivalent, but for competitive sports (Gilmore, 2004). As an illustration here, in his analysis of the lads' fandom at Manchester United, King highlights the love they felt for their team. A love that facilitates the synthesis seen in the depressive position between their feelings of disappointment (and hostility) at the changes occurring at Old Trafford during the 1990s and their deep-seated need to persist with their support of their team despite the changes.

But this attachment, which could be such a powerful resource of opposition has facilitated the lads' acceptance of the transformation of football...their love of the team compels them to continue attending...As long as changes in football allow the lads to preserve some of the ecstatic solidarity of their fandom intact, they will accommodate major grievances and inconveniences. (King, 1998: 166)

## And the Lovemark?

It could therefore be argued that the idea of the Lovemark possesses a degree of intuitive appeal, but that Roberts' (2004) conceptualisation of love fails to account for its depth and complexity. This could potentially result in an experience of inauthenticity by consumers when this theory is actualised. For the use of love to market and sell products and services is not new – even though Roberts might argue that its systemisation through the Lovemarks matrix marks a departure here. Because a tool is now in place to offer potential clients both the structure and the metrics needed to chart a path and measure the progress of the Lovemark concept when it is used.

It is interesting that 'Lovemarks' provide only a limited discussion of our first experiences of love that are so fundamental to us; with the central operation of our first non-me object (i.e. those who occupy the mother role) given scant focus. If Roberts and his team had identified the first objects of love we experience, and investigated the nature of our attachment to them, the ambivalent, problematic, intense nature of love would have emerged – without even considering the psychoanalytic reading used here.

For those charged with protecting the England Lovemark, it could be argued that the continuation of spectator disorder which accompanies the team's presence at major tournaments is needed to re-enforce the 'legitimate' (arguably disciplinary) form of love they utilise to brand the marque. And whilst the discussion here has necessarily polarised love and its expression, there needs to be an acknowledgement that many football fans are fairly nonchalant about the national team: wanting it to do well, following the team's progress through various competitions and experiencing inevitable disappointment when they do not meet expectations and desires, but placing love of *club* at the heart of their feelings, investing their primary love of the game and their fiscal and other priorities *there*.

Finally, how have the revelations of the sexual activities of key England figures: the Captain, David Beckham, the Manager, Sven Goran Eriksson and the former FA Chief Executive, Mark Palios, impacted on the marque they were allegedly employed to cherish, develop and maintain? And what is the longer term damage inflicted on the public image of the national team? For these two bodies are inextricably intertwined with the FA enduring heavy and continuing criticism for its managerial and fiscal ineptitude. Following 'Svenngate', could it be argued that the FA (with worrying corollaries for the England team) is now perceived more as a 'lovebite'<sup>9</sup> than a Lovemark? With some very interesting implications for alternative marketing of the marque...

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9 And thus offering a very different conceptualisation of love.

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