

The boundaries of football-related violence: exploring and explaining its everyday dimensions

The issue of football-related violence refers to a broad spectrum of aggressive behaviours related to football games and football culture more broadly. However, most research on the issue has been done on the physical aggression of football fans exploring such issues as spontaneous and emotional acts of violence at football games, targeted on players, referees and teams' officials or studying football hooligan subculture, namely organised groups of football fans engaging in competitive, intergroup, physical violence aimed to achieve symbolic hegemony of one's group.

In reality, however, the physical form of football-related violence is not limited only to these two dimensions. For instance, in some countries wearing colours of football clubs other than the local one in public spaces can meet with physical violence. Furthermore, football-related violence reaches football academies and young players. There are reports showing that young footballers and their parents are verbally, mentally, and physically abused by peers and hooligans supporting local rivals. Finally, evidence has started to emerge that football-related violence is mirrored also in fans' attitudes in the form of prejudice and hostility against fans of rival clubs.

These events indicate clearly that football-related violence is not limited to football itself. It also penetrates everyday life. This project aims to explore and explain this phenomenon. Firstly, its goal is to (1) identify and characterise everyday dimensions of football-related violence. Secondly, it aims to examine (2) how football-related violence achieves the status of 'legitimate violence' among football fans, namely 'required, authorized, or approved under the rule or norms of the society or social group of the actor'.¹ Finally, it intends to examine (3) whether, and if so to what extent, the level of consideration of a given football club as a rival predicts (3.1) level of prejudice against them (3.2) passive acceptance of verbal abuse and physical violence towards its fans, and (3.3) readiness for engagement in violence against fans of this team.

¹ Spaaij, R. (2014). Sports crowd violence: An interdisciplinary synthesis. *Aggression and violent behavior*, 19(2): 149.