‘With His Money, *I* Could Afford to be Depressed’: Markets, Masculinity and Mental Distress in the English Football Press

Stephen Wagg
University of Surrey, Roehampton
Whitefields, England

Abstract
The article looks at the notion of mental distress among professional footballers in the top English league. Using two case studies, it argues that the English sports press has in recent times increasingly baulked at the idea of mental distress and, in particular, at the suggestion that a footballer might suffer from depression. Instead the issue has been rendered, in general, as one of class privilege, of professional efficiency and of masculinity. The context for this has been the emergence of the English Premiership and, beyond this, the progressive deregulation of capitalist economies. These changes have been accompanied by the proliferation of new free market philosophies, promoting discourses in which individual responsibility is paramount and the concept of mental illness itself, especially in relation to the highly paid, is more and more difficult to sustain. In this regard no difference in substance could be found between the ‘popular’ and the ‘quality’ press.

This articles deals with press coverage of prominent footballers in distress. It is organised around two case studies, that of First Division player Kevin Beattie in 1974 and Stan Collymore, a footballer in the English Premiership, during the season of 1999-2000. It is concerned, first and foremost, with commenting on the way contemporary football discourse handles the notion of mental distress, a condition from which both Beattie and Collymore were said to be suffering. These case studies, however, inevitably, raise further questions about masculinity in relation to football and the media and, in the matter of Collymore, about the accumulated social and political impact of the Premiership itself. The Premiership, I argue, while generating huge revenue and public interest, has nevertheless failed to establish full legitimacy in the eyes of its public. The market reforms, of which it is a product, have enriched many of the people who run, or play for, Premiership clubs. This, as with similar market reforms in other spheres such as the British railways and other public services, has caused considerable public protest, but on the whole it has been this public indignation, and not the reforms themselves, that has been addressed by the English sports press. Collymore became the unwitting focus of this form of coverage in February 2000, in what amounted to a minor moral panic about footballers’ behaviour. Moreover, during this episode, in a particularly piquant conjunction of events, Stanley Matthews, the symbol *par excellence* of a kinder, gentler, more dignified and humbly rewarded English

footballer, died, inviting inescapable comparisons between his time and the present. The discourse of the English sports media on these events, I contend, relates directly to the recent market reforms in English football and, indeed, shows something of the impact of market changes on the sports media themselves. These market reforms are, of course, part of a widely acknowledged pattern of economic liberalisation around the world during the last twenty years. This liberalisation, in the opinion of many, has wrought a transition in many societies from 'managed capitalism' to 'disorganised capitalism' (e.g. Dicken, 1986; Hall & Jacques, 1989; Lash & Urry, 1987). I begin by detailing some of the important material changes that English football has undergone and some of their likely social consequences, before moving to discuss contemporary media discussion of footballers and notions of 'stress'.

New Times? Football, Fame and Wealth

English football, it can safely be said, entered on a new era in the early 1990s. This era, symbolised by the inauguration of the Premier League in 1992, has a number of important defining features. Stewardship of many clubs has passed to representatives of national or international, rather than local, capital. Through the involvement of satellite television, TV spectators now outnumber those paying to watch a game 'live' and most of the latter category part with between £20 and £30 per game to see Premiership teams play in all-seater stadia. Football, in England and elsewhere, has been consecrated as a commodity, giving rise to a commercial sub-sector of specialist advice on football finance, and in March 2000 England's most prosperous club, Manchester United, was valued at £1 billion (Cassy, 2000). Most importantly in the present context, the higher echelons of English football world over the final two decades of the twentieth century actively relinquished the notion that 'the strong must help the weak'. This ethos, which had inscribed much of the English League's history until the last quarter of the twentieth century (Taylor, 1997: 248-77) and, indeed, the history of other leading English sports (Vamplew, 1988: 112-53), was progressively dismantled in the 1980s. Moreover it was a threat by leading clubs to break away from the Football League that helped bring the Premiership into being (Goldberg & Wagg, 1991).

The massive commercialisation of the game worldwide has led to a crop of books variously concerned to ponder what happened to 'the people's game' (cf. Horton, 1995; Sugden & Tomlinson, 1998; 1999; Yallop, 1999) and how some vestige of it might be salvaged (Brown & Walsh; 1999). A leading member of the country's growing cadre of football academics recently pronounced: 'Finishing positions in the F.A. Premier League now largely reflect who is paying what and to whom. High payers finish first; low salary bills usually mean relegation' (Williams, 1999: 66). These salaries, measured against the national average and against British football's own not too distant past, are very high indeed. The weekly income from playing alone of

Manchester United captain Roy Keane is widely accepted to be around £52,000 per week, double and probably treble what most of the club's followers might earn in a year – or, in some cases, given United's global 'fan base', a lifetime.

At the start of the 2000-2001 season, Keane was the highest paid player in the Premiership, but most clubs in this division now have a cluster of millionaires among their playing staff. Top footballers are celebrities of some long standing, but their celebrity rests increasingly not only on their expertise, but on their public visibility (many of them are, in the writer Dick Hebdige's phrase, 'walking news items') and on their wealth. As such, they are now often to be found in gossip columns and in journals dedicated to exploring 'lifestyles of the rich and famous' and, thus, have become part of a discourse and a pattern of consumption that historically has mixed reverence and resentment in equal parts. There are, in principle, equal markets for news of the pleasures of celebrities (parties, cars, soft furnishings) and of their pain or inadequacy (drugs, divorce). For instance, awe-struck media commentary on the skill, wealth and domesticity of England footballer David Beckham goes hand in hand with a proliferation of jokes about his, and his wife's, supposed intellectual shortcomings (cf. *Mail on Sunday,* 2000).

Free Markets and Mental Distress

The principal point I want to make here is that the proliferation of economic liberalism has helped to generate a new political framing of mental distress. In 'managed' capitalist societies, where certain levels of state responsibility for the mentally ill were taken for granted, radical challenges to the consensually agreed medical provision were often made from a libertarian position. R.D. Laing, Thomas Szasz, Erving Goffman and others variously opposed the prescriptions of mainstream psychiatry and called for the emancipation of distressed individuals. In more recent times, amid rhetorical invocations of greater 'individual responsibility' and political policies to promote 'care in the community' for the mentally ill, the field of mental health has become more exposed to market philosophies and disciplines. In practice social class has become a greater factor in the addressing of mental distress, with better off patients often seeking help from among a growing diversity of treatments and receiving it on a private, fee-for-service basis. For the poorer sections of society, professional and institutional help has become sparse, with neo-liberal administrations now borrowing freely from the radical precepts of the 1960s in justification (cf. Sedgwick, 1982).

In public commentary, meanwhile, the very notion of mental distress itself has often been on trial. One the most notable instances here was the trial of Peter Sutcliffe, the so-called 'Yorkshire Ripper' in 1981. That Sutcliffe had committed the killings of which he was accused was not in dispute. Contention in court was wholly concerned with whether he was 'mad or bad'. The prosecution, led by the Conservative government's Attorney General,

successfully established, against unanimous medical judgement, that he was bad (Ward Jouve, 1988: 34. cf. Burn, 1984). Such a verdict, delivered on an apparently deranged lorry driver in defiance of the testimony of mental health professionals, illustrated the difficulty now in showing that a working class wrongdoer was mentally ill. Moreover, if there was diminishing recognition for psychosis – in effect, living in another world – even less sympathy could now be expected for those claimed to be suffering from *neurosis* – that is, difficulties living in this one. In contemporary societies, steeped in free market doctrines, the idea of neurotic mental illness can be easily waved away, along with any other purportedly extenuating circumstance. In May, 2000 a US county prosecutor reflected on the recent execution of a young woman:

> She claims she was horribly depressed, she was overweight and she was a single mom, and she didn't have enough money. My response to that is 'Welcome to America'. Plenty of folks are in far worse situations than she was (Borger, 2000: 14).

In the public discourse of contemporary industrial societies – discourse that is increasingly influenced by the popular, and the not so popular, press – two important and linked assumptions can now be discerned. Firstly, that mental illness, of dubious validity in any event, is 'no excuse' when someone does wrong and, secondly, that mental distress, given its sharpened class dimension, is often no more than the self-preoccupation of the rich. This distorted rendering of a class reality invites the angry cry: '*We* could afford to be depressed with *his* money'.

Football, Mental Distress and the English Sports Pages

Mental anguish, while not the most recurrent theme in the discourse of the English football press, has nevertheless become part of the taken-for-granted culture which national football reporters have trawled for stories. In the great majority of cases, however, reportage in this area has concerned footballers who grappled unsuccessfully with the problems of wealth, celebrity and excess. Since the mid-1960s prominent British footballers including George Best, Jimmy Greaves, Paul Gascoigne, Tony Adams and Paul Merson have all made public their addictions, in particular, to alcohol. Mental distress here then, has been linked to a specific problem, namely addictions. And, in general, it is worth noting, these addictions, be they to drink, drugs or gambling, have drawn more sympathy than reproof from the press corps. Moreover, both Adams and Merson produced redemptive memoirs in collaboration with *Observer* football writer Ian Ridley (Adams & Ridley, 1998; Merson & Ridley, 1999). However, if a footballer has been diagnosed as suffering from depression – to the lay person an altogether more ephemeral condition – press response is likely to be more mistrustful.

Such a press response, I suggest, emerges at least partly because problems of addiction can be seen, regardless of the their psychological complexity, essentially as matters of *consumption.* It belongs therefore to the realm of the personal, and the personal difficulties of the rich and famous, as any journalist knows, offer vicarious pleasures to a variety of readers. But, ironically, the less definable condition of depression may have greater implications for the public world of employment. If, as a result of depression, someone is falling out with colleagues, questioning managerial decisions or not showing up for work, then there are clear implications for what might unfashionably be termed the relations of production. This can be illustrated not only by the 'Collymore Affair' of 1999, but by an incident in the mid-1970s.

1974: Where Is Kevin Beattie?

In December of 1974 the Ipswich Town defender Kevin Beattie was selected to play for the England Under 23 team. The squad was scheduled to meet the England manager Don Revie in Manchester on 16 December, but Beattie, despite having been put on the right train by his club manager Bobby Robson, did not arrive. A brief search found Beattie in a pub in his home town of Carlisle, playing dominoes with his father. News of Beattie's disappearance was first carried by the *Sun* on 17 December under the headline 'Beattie Mystery has Revie in a Stew' (Clough, 1974a: 27). Over the following two or three days all the mainstream sports press reported the matter. But whereas broadsheets such as the *Guardian* contented themselves with around two column inches of factual reporting of the affair as it unfolded (Beattie lost/ Beattie found/Beattie dropped by club after missing training) the popular press explored various 'human interest' angles (*Guardian,* 2000a, 2000b, 2000c). This had two important implications: firstly, it helped to bring out the social and political dimensions of the affair; secondly, these implications became part of the affair itself, helping, for example to generate more of the 'pressure' that Beattie was claiming he could not handle.

Initially, during 18 and 19 December, the football reporters of the English popular press, defining the event in dialogue principally with Revie, Robson and Beattie himself, address the matter with some circumspection, balancing extenuating circumstance with individual responsibility, sympathy with reproof. Firstly, for example, there is an assertion of likely causes external to Beattie himself. In the *Daily Mail* Beattie tells of 'the pressures of top football and the arrival his four-week-old daughter driving him to the disappearing act that could cost him a suspension from international football' (Powell, 1974a: 32). On the same day the *Sun* is similarly satisfied that 'Beattie's incredible actions are obviously the culmination of massive pressures at club and international level, coupled with the recent arrival of his first child'. The *Daily Express* muses that Beattie might be 'having difficulties over his sudden rise from poverty to stardom' (Miller, 1974: 16) and in the

Mail Bobby Robson adds medical evidence: ‘The boy has definitely been suffering from a virus infection that has pulled him down’ (Powell, 1974a: 32).

And there are other affirmations. ‘I know Beattie well’, writes Bob Driscoll in the *Sun.* ‘He is not a nightclubber and is happily married. He also has all the steely qualities of a future England captain. So it was not the whine of a cry-baby when he declared yesterday: “I need a rest because I’m mentally and physically exhausted”’. (Driscoll, 1974: 28). ‘This wasn’t a rebellion’, Steve Curry quotes Beattie as saying in the *Daily Express* the following morning. ‘I live for football. The game . . . has given me so much’. Beattie’s deviance, this argues, was an aberration. Really he is normal – a dutiful employee and husband, a red-blooded male and patriot (Curry, 1974a: 16).

And some elements of the response to Beattie’s predicament treat openly with the feminine. ‘I just felt I had to get home for a chat with my Mum. I can talk to her. She is the only one who understands’, Beattie tells the *Daily Mail* (Powell, 1974a: 32) while the *Sun* asserts that England manager Revie had been ‘worried sick’ about Beattie’s disappearance (Clough, 1974b: 27). Next day it is reported that Revie has sent Beattie a telegram to mark his 21st birthday. Here Beattie is, apparently, allowed to be a child again, needing his mother; moreover the unlikely figure of the England football manager is rendered as Beattie’s mother surrogate.

Amid the general solicitation, there are stem reminders. In principle, disobedience, especially among such highly visible and well remunerated workers as professional footballers, cannot be condoned. Frank Clough questions whether Beattie is made of the right stuff:

> If England are to reemerge as a world power Revie needs players of initiative, intelligence, character and determination. Beattie, a model professional for the past three or four years at Ipswich, appeared to fit that bill perfectly – until Monday (Clough, 1974b: 27).

In the *Daily Mirror* Harry Miller reports that the previous evening Revie has warned his Under 23 squad that ‘if players are going to have big cars and smart homes . . . they must absorb the pressures involved in getting them’ (Miller, H., 1974: 26).

Twenty four hours on and the worm has turned. Beattie has not reported for training at Ipswich Town and his wife says he is still in bed. His club manager and tabloid interrogators repudiate their previous softness. Stress is re-presented as weakness and Beattie’s behaviour as disobedience. Beneath the headline ‘Fury as Rebel Kevin does it again’ a ‘furious’ Bobby Robson informs the *Sun* that ‘Beattie has been passed fit by the club doctor, but he did not report for training’ (Woolnough, 1974: 28). The *Express* reports that ‘No-play Beattie stays in bed’ (Curry, 1974b: 14) and the *Mirror* speaks mockingly of a

new 'Rock-a-bye Beattie Row' (Clarke, 1974: 26). Beattie now misses Ipswich's match away to Leicester City on the evening of Friday 20 December. By an extraordinary coincidence, during this match, the Leicester player Keith Weller, recently deposed as team captain, refuses to come out for the second half. His motive, that among other things he has been upset by barracking from sections of the crowd, strays into the same emotional-political territory as that occupied for the previous four days by Kevin Beattie. The football world, managers and press alike, will tolerate no further talk of 'stress'. In the *Daily Mail* Weller's manager Jimmy Bloomfield states: 'There is no excuse for this as far as I'm concerned. I think it's a disgrace' (Farmer, 1974a: 28). Elsewhere in the same issue there is a further re-evaluation of the Beattie affair: 'Well, just how much does a new baby affect a star footballer's form?' In the *Sun* on the same day Bob Wilson asks gravely whether Beattie might not 'crack again' in a World Cup or European Championship game (Wilson, 1974: 26). Jeff Powell, in the *Daily Mail,* describes how a 'lot of hard-up kids were sick at the news of one of their own kind running away home instead of coming of age with an England cap. They would', judges Powell, 'be unimpressed by talk of pressures and stress' (Powell, 1974b: 27). The following day the paper returns to the Weller case: a story has Norwich City manager John Bond calling for Weller to be blacklisted by Football league clubs (Farmer, 1974b: 32).

On 23 December the *Daily Mirror* produces evidence of the lack of public recognition for 'stress'. Out walking his dog after dark, Beattie has been stopped by a man who, Beattie assumes, wants to wish him a happy Christmas. Instead the man says bluntly: 'Beattie, you're chicken' (Wright, 1974: 7).

From the Beattie incident we can note the following. To a football world still attuning to the wealth and celebrity that the abolition of the maximum wage (in 1961) and increased television coverage have brought, signs of mental distress in a leading footballer receive, initially, a tentative response. But, quite rapidly, the definers of the event cease talking about a distressed individual and begin to describe a weak one. The duties of the 'model professional' in the modern football market are reasserted and this reassertion draws on notions of a masculinity unpolluted by emotion. Real men absorb the pressures, turn up for training on time and do as they are told. They do not 'crack'. No official medical label has been attached to Beattie, the club doctor having passed him as fit, so the question of treatment does not arise. When he (and Weller) have been reproved the incident is forgotten – it merits only two short paragraphs in Beattie's autobiography, published in 1998 (Beattie, 1998).

Mad, Bad or Sad? The Stan Collymore Affair,

By 1999 Stan Collymore, who turned 29 in that year, had a long established reputation in the English football world both as a gifted footballer (capped by England three times, the first in 1995) and as a troublemaker. A native of England's Black Country in the North West Midlands, he was rejected as a

teenager by local League clubs Walsall and Wolverhampton before making his name with non-League Stafford Rangers. Success there brought him into the League with Crystal Palace and, subsequently, Southend before Nottingham Forest paid £2 million for him in 1994. After two seasons at Forest he moved to Liverpool for a further £8.5 million. In 1997, having, among other things, refused to play for the club's reserve team or to move to the Liverpool area, he transferred, for another large fee (£7.5m) to the Birmingham club Aston Villa, the club he had followed as a boy. His performances for Villa were generally accepted to be disappointing.

The apparently mild-mannered Collymore; defined by many coaches as 'trouble' since his youth, had often been at the centre of controversy. During the early 1990s he had variously fallen out with team-mates, defied managers and been involved in scuffles in nightclubs. Some of the incidents in which he had been involved were said to have had a racial dimension: Collymore, who is black, had been said to have reacted to racial insults. Little, however, was ever made of this. Now, in February 1998, he accused his former teammate, the Liverpool player Steve Harkness, of racially abusing him. Twice in the spring and summer of that year he was publicly accused of physically assaulting girlfriends. In July the sportswear firm Diadora withdrew £1.2 million sponsorship of the player when he was seen, tactlessly, to be wearing Nike trainers. In November he was sent off during a match against Liverpool after a violent tackle on Harkness. In January 1999 he failed to show up for an Aston Villa game and was then admitted to the Priory clinic in South London (for biographical information cf. *Daily Mail,* 2000; *Daily Telegraph,* 2000).

I want now to detail the press coverage of Collymore's difficulties and related matters during 1999. To do so I will draw on the sports pages of *The Guardian* and *The Observer. The Guardian* is one of four major 'quality' daily newspapers in England and, along with *The Independent,* the most liberal on social questions. The *Observer* is its broad equivalent in the Sunday press. The *Guardian,* it should be remembered, had given the Beattie incident minimal and exclusively factual reportage back in 1974.

On 25 January 1999, *Guardian* football columnist Martin Thorpe reports a showdown between Collymore and Villa manager John Gregory, following Collymore's refusal to accept a place on the substitute's bench. The player's agent has suggested that the 'decision not to play was prompted by illness but Gregory has discounted this and is treating the case as one of insubordination'. The basis for this judgement is unclear, but Gregory nevertheless asserts: 'I've supported Stan since he joined this club. I wanted to find out myself about him as opposed to listening to all the stories' (Thorpe, 1999: 1)

Two days later, with the definition of Collymore as 'ill' now introduced into the discourse, Paul Weaver (1999) in the same paper mockingly confronts the notion of footballers in mental distress:

> With the weary hope that the players concerned are not otherwise engaged with their shrinks or wriggling in strait-jackets in the local giggle house, with the wistful dream that the 22 footballers might keep hold of their marbles for at least 90 minutes, I plan to attend a Premiership football match on Saturday (Weaver, 1999: 26).

Weaver (1999) then lists a number of leading sportsmen who have been diagnosed recently as suffering from stress-related illness, but insists that 'sometimes it is difficult to muster any sympathy' and alludes to 'a general feeling that such players need a hefty kick up the backside'. Despite then quoting a sport psychologist and a stress counsellor, both of whom are more willing than he is to acknowledge the existence of stress (and who 'make much sense'), Weaver (1999) prefers to invoke the memory of autocratic club manager Brian Clough, retired since the mid-1990s. What Collymore needs, insists Weaver, is some of Clough's 'brutal and sometimes witty pragmatism' (Weaver, 1999: 26).

On 29 January, again in the *Guardian,* Niall Quinn (1999), himself a Premiership footballer, addresses the issue:

> Two weeks ago in this space I gave what some people described as a robust defence of professional footballers. I stand by what I said then concerning players, their environment and their wages . . . [but] a tiny fraction of footballers can make it difficult for the vast majority and this week Stan Collymore has been making things very difficult indeed (Quinn, 1999: 7).

Quinn (1999) remembers Collymore's last game for Crystal Palace, in which, he acknowledges, Stan took some 'serious abuse from Palace fans and reacted with an ugly gesture'. Here, Quinn (1999: 7) had thought, 'was a boy with problems'. But these problems lay not with the abusers, but with Collymore himself, who 'has a major chip on his shoulder (Quinn, 1999: 7).

By the end of January, then, on the sports pages of the English broadsheet press, a perceptible bandwagon about arrogant and self-indulgent footballers seeking to dignify their bad behaviour with medical labels has begun to roll. Collymore's club manager, John Gregory (a primary definer of the player's situation throughout) has given the affair an explicit social class dimension: 'Stressed out? Try telling that to a 29-year old at somewhere like Rochdale with three months left on his contract, a wife, three kids and a mortgage' (Ridley, 1999: 5). In the *Observer* football writer Ian Ridley, collaborator on the autobiographies of two recovering-addict footballers, now leads for the defence. Collymore, he says, though wealthy and gifted, is a loner prone to surfing the internet and weeping when he tries to discuss his problems:

he suffers from low self esteem. Maybe, suggests Ridley, clubs should think of appointing counsellors and relinquish their 'old-fashioned macho ideas about trick cyclists' (Ridley, 1999: 5). In an adjacent column, Wimbledon player Robbie Earle is of the same view: 'As it is, Villa may have to sell Stan at a knockdown price and then spend millions replacing him – all money which might have been saved by employing a stress counsellor, as other big companies do' (Earle, 1999: 5)

This, of course, is a market rationale for recognising mental distress, but Earle (1999), significantly one of the few black voices heard in the Collymore furore, also contests the dominant depiction of Stan as a man:

> I have met him a few times off the field and he has always struck me as quiet and deep-thinking. . . . Perhaps coming into the professional game later in life makes a difference, too. If you have grown up in a football environment it makes it easier to deal with the dressing room banter and realise that when others make fun of you they mean no harm. It is not unlike the army. (Earle, 1999: 5).

On 6 February the *Guardian* reports further reflections by Gregory on Collymore, now receiving treatment in a clinic: 'I do not know if he is coming back and in all honesty I do not care. How many more chances do I have to give Stan?' (White, P., 1999a: 3)

The following day the correspondence page of the *Observer,* a week on from the articles by Ridley (1999) and Earle (1999), there is little endorsement of their view that someone in Collymore's predicament needs counselling. 'In the crowd at Villa', writes Mike Turner from Stockton-on-Tees, 'there will be those with bigger personal problems than him and no £20,000 a week to pay for private treatment. Surely your article should have told Collymore to get out on the pitch and use his extraordinary talent to bring a shining light to the lives of less fortunate individuals'. Similarly, Graham Rea of Yardley in Birmingham, argues that it is 'difficult enough for some to put together the price of admission for themselves and their family without being lectured on the difficulties of existing on £20,000 per week' *(The Observer,* 1999: 3).

Toward the end of March, Gregory seems to confirm privately to reporters that Collymore is finished at Aston Villa: 'there are suggestions that Gregory has totally run out of patience with Collymore and that the former England striker's contract will be cancelled in the summer'. On the record, however, Gregory states that the player 'needs full-time treatment to overcome a difficult problem' (White, P., 1999b: 28). Much of the, often populist, discourses in both the Beattie and Collymore incidents are ambiguous in this respect: the problem of stress is simultaneously recognised and denied.

In July the *Guardian* returns to the general issue of public mental distress with a feature on private clinics. The article is jaunty in tone and focuses on

Roehampton Priory, styled here as 'an exclusive bolt-hole' for celebrities. 'In return for £3,000 a week, usually for several weeks, the Priory has chased their demons for them'. Here the staff outnumber the patients and the car park is full of 'jeeps and BMWs' (Beckett, 1999: 2).

On 20 July the *Guardian* reports that Gregory has despatched Collymore on loan to the First Division club Fulham, sending him on his way with more angry words:

> I know he was suffering from clinical depression last season but the day after the season finished he checked out of the clinic where he was receiving treatment and went on holiday. I understand he has fully recovered but, if he hasn't, then he should pack the game in (White & Brodkin, 1999: 31).

Fulham, football reporters Peter White and Jon Brodkin (1999: 31) remind readers, is in South West London – 'Helpfully the Priory clinic is nearby'.

In early November, Peter White writes in the *Observer* that, improbably, 'Aston Villa outcast Stan Collymore has declared that he is prepared to withstand the barrage of criticism he has been subjected to by his manager John Gregory and will fight to re-establish himself at the club'. 'The bottom line', insists Collymore, 'is I want to play for this club more than I have ever done' (White, P., 1999c: 11). By the end of the year, however, Gregory, despite a serious injury to his main striker Dion Dublin, has shown no sign of relenting. In the *Guardian,* White quotes Collymore thus: 'I feel physically and mentally fit to play in the top flight, and I know I could make a difference. . . . The manager has decided not to take up this option and I find that very baffling' (White, P., 1999d: 22).

In early February 2000, Stan Collymore signs for the Premiership club Leicester City. Leicester agree to part with what is, by the standards of the contemporary transfer market, a minimal sum: £500,000, payable only after Collymore has played 50 games for Leicester. On 12 February he plays his first game for Leicester, away to Watford. Next day, Alan Smith, formerly assistant manager at Crystal Palace when Collymore played there, observes that mental distress makes for a precarious investment: 'Stan Collymore's state of mind has been the subject of great debate over the past year or so, and it amazes me that more clubs do not . . . check out a player's mental as well as physical health before they sign him'. As for the player himself, views 'about him tend to be polarised, that he is either an ultra-sensitive soul who needs love and affection, or that he is simply mad. I would suggest that the truth is somewhere in between, and part of the problem is that he is insecure and none too bright' (Smith, 2000: 5).

On Monday 14 February, in the *Guardian,* Jeremy Alexander's (2000) match report of Collymore's Leicester debut maintains his newspaper's tone of

mockery and unelaborated scepticism. Most of his eleven column inches are devoted to Collymore, on the ground that 'as a main attraction the game could have driven strong men into clinics' (Alexander, 2000: 3). Although Collymore has played quite well, he is dismissed as 'a charmer who can strike with either foot and both personalities' and he 'remains a conundrum wrapped in contradiction and stuffed with scrambled ego' (Alexander, 2000: 3). After the Watford game the Leicester first team squad fly to the Spanish resort of La Manga in Spain for a brief training holiday.

Stan Collymore: Folk Devil and Moral Panic

On the evening of 16 February prime time news bulletins of all the major television channels in England carry an item about the expulsion of the Leicester City party from their Spanish hotel. Players and coaching staff have been accused by the hotel management of misbehaviour and have flown back to Leicester. They are shown, half illuminated by press lights, driving solemnly past a contingent of reporters and into the night.

On the morning of 17 February all the sports pages of the major English daily newspapers lead with stories of this incident. The coverage of the episode is extensive, especially in the tabloid press: the *Sun,* the *Mirror* and the *Daily Star* devote six pages to it, the *Express* four and the *Daily Mail* three.

Three – the *Daily Star,* the *Mirror* and the *Sun* – lead with it on their front pages. Across the papers, while there are predictable differences of presentation and the use of language, there is nevertheless a degree of unanimity. All the papers carry quite detailed accounts of the Leicester players' behaviour, based on the testimony of the managing director of the complex from which the Leicester party have been evicted, and of disgruntled hotel guests, but also of Collymore himself. There is an acknowledgement that Leicester players have been drinking, become rowdy and annoyed other guests. The hotel's managing director told *The Guardian:*

> They were insulting and rude to people, asking ladies to dance who didn't want to and being obnoxious. Around a dozen of them were drinking for several hours and they became increasingly loud and drunk. They were jumping on chairs and tables and being generally unruly, upsetting a lot of our other clients (Taylor, 2000: 34).

At the end of these disturbances, a fire extinguisher has been let off, on his own admission, by Collymore.

Three things are important to note about the press treatment here. Firstly, in spite of the acceptance, common to all press accounts of the matter, that up to a dozen Leicester players were involved in the disturbances, Collymore's name is the organising focus of every story. He features, for example, in

virtually every headline: *The Times* refers to 'Collymore and team sent home in disgrace'; the *Sun* has 'Colly Runs Riot'; the *Daily Star* says 'Colly's a wally on new team's jolly'; the *Mirror* tells of 'Colly's Shame'; the *Daily Express* laboriously parodies a song from the *Mary Poppins* 'Super Colly's Frantic Antic, Isn't he Atrocious?'; while the *Guardian* speculates on the player's possible dismissal with 'Collymore's career in the balance'.

In all papers likewise the bulk of the narrative and quoted testimony concerns Collymore. Here the managing director of the hotel complex, Tony Coles, is the primary definer. In regard to the fire extinguisher, Coles assures *The Independent* there is 'absolutely no doubt' that Collymore let it off (Tongue & Shaw, 2000: 32). To the *Express* he insists 'Collymore set off the fire extinguisher. He was at the centre of the disturbance' (Doogan, 2000: 78), and to the *Sun* Coles states: 'Collymore lived up to his controversial reputation by grabbing a fire extinguisher and letting it off. The same paper prints the headline 'You Moron, Colly' paradoxically above a large picture of another Leicester player, Gerry Taggart, apparently drunk with three £20 notes stuck to his face (Askill, Sullivan & Self, 2000: 4). In the *Mirror* Richard Pillow, a businessman staying at the La Manga hotel testifies: 'I always thought Stan Collymore was misunderstood. After what I saw last night, I realise he obviously is not. He behaved like an animal' (North, Hughes & Rock, 2000: 4). An unidentified female guest tells the *Sun:* 'Collymore and some of the younger players were chatting up some girls. The atmosphere was all very friendly until Collymore went mental' (Askill et al., 2000: 1). The following day the *Daily Star* on its front page accuses the Leicester players of drinking more in a night than the players of Norwegian club Rosenborg (also staying at the hotel) drink in a year (Chandler & Paul, 2000: 1). Again no other individual players are accused; instead they are styled collectively as 'Collymorons'.

Second, the affair is widely depicted as an affray: 'Drunk yob [Collymore] trashes bar' in the *Sun* (Askill & Self, 2000: 1); the *Daily Star* reports a 'booze brawl' (Kaniuk & Chandler, 2000: 1); the *Daily Telegraph* quotes Coles saying: 'It was a shameful spectacle, a bunch of well paid professionals having too much to drink and behaving like hooligans' (Davies, 2000: 44); the *Mirror* and the *Express* both write of a 'drunken rampage' (North et al., 2000: 1; Mitchell & McGowan, 2000: 6); and the *Daily Mail* tells of a 'drunken fracas' (Woodward & Gysin, 2000: 5). In the *Guardian* Daniel Taylor (2000: 34) suggests that the discharged fire extinguisher covered forty guests with foam. On 18 February 2000, as other papers are beginning to relax their use of extravagant imagery, and elsewhere in their pages Collymore claims to have squirted only one person (the Leicester City physiotherapist), the *Daily Star* is still compounding the indictment: 'Leicester's sick soccer louts joked about the drunken rampage that got them kicked out of a top Spanish hotel, it was revealed last night' (Chandler & Paul, 2000: 4).

Third, in virtually all the press commentary on this event an explicit link is drawn between the class position of top footballers and what is held to be a crisis in public confidence about their behaviour. Collymore, suggests James Lawton (2000: 79), chief sports writer on the *Express,* 'has come to represent all the weaknesses, the betrayals and the self-indulgences of today's superstar football'. In the *Sun* John Sadler (2000: 58) describes Leicester supporters queuing 'in bitter cold – some in blankets' to buy tickets for the club's forthcoming Worthington Cup Final. Sadler (2000: 58) further argues that: 'The shameful outcome of an epidemic of indiscipline in the English game – this time reaching its dreaded height when a certain Stan Collymore let off a fire extinguisher that had hotel guests running for the exit. It is fast becoming apparent that there are high-profile and handsomely-paid players who are unworthy of the people who idolise them'.

The *Daily Mail,* is, ironically, the only paper to try to understand Collymore's behaviour but this is nevertheless in the context of four pages the theme of which is 'The Shame Game'. Thus, on page 94 Ian Ladyman (2000a: 94) writes of an 'insecure Collymore' acting out of 'a childlike desire to ingratiate himself with one of the most close-knit dressing rooms in Premiership football' – making the player briefly a social actor rather than a folk devil. And on page 95 John Greechan (2000: 95) gives further context by citing a number of similar escapades from post-war British football history. But this is within a contrary paradigm of disgrace, brought by the 'antics of the Premiership's millionaire stars' (Ladyman, 2000b: 93). Moreover, while the *Mail,* historically hostile to such explanations, treats briefly with the possibility of extenuating social circumstance, the *Guardian,* the favoured paper of the liberal professions sternly repudiates such notions. Here Jim White writes:

> Condoned, excuses made, blame apportioned elsewhere: it is the daily diet of the modern footballer. Football has been overrun by a bastardised form of Californian regression therapy. There is no need to take responsibility for your own actions because it is always someone else's fault: referees, opponents, the media (White, 2000: 34)

Later on 17 February in the *Leicester Mercury,* the local evening paper, it is said that Leicester City have 'pledged action' (Anderson, 2000: 6). A press conference is held at which Collymore apologises and it is announced that he has been fined £35.000 and warned as to his future conduct. Expenses and hotel repair bills have been met by the players. Some in Leicester remain unimpressed by the furore. 'They should just leave the guy alone and let him talk with his feet. I hope they enjoyed their night', says 35 year old Pat James. 'Everyone does it, it's just lads when they're together' suggests 18 year old Jenny Blackwell (*Leicester Mercury,* 2000).

On Sunday 5 March, the tabloid *News of the World* on its front page accuses Collymore of a further bar brawl, this time at a hotel in Buckinghamshire (Harrison & Taylor, 2000: 1). For Collymore, who has been warned by Leicester about his future conduct, this seems to imply dismissal. However, there is no response from the rest of the press and no more is said of this latter incident.

Collymore himself appears on BBC television's *Football Focus* programme on 18 March, where he is interviewed sympathetically by black ex-professional footballer Mark Bright. In the Collymore strives to explain depression: 'I think that we confuse depression with feeling down . . . but this was an illness that got me to the brink'. If he hadn't sought help 'there's a good chance I wouldn't have been here now'. The studio discussion which follows the interview, however, maintains a discourse in which the idea mental distress ultimately cannot be accommodated. BBC pundit Mark Lawrenson, while appearing to acknowledge his own ignorance in the matter ('Only he knows what he's been through') nevertheless counter-defines Collymore as faint-hearted: 'There are that many footballers out in the country that haven't half his ability, but have got more than his application. And it's the application, now, that he has to show'. Ultimately, for Lawrenson, as in virtually the entire press commentary on the affair, Collymore is simply an inefficient performer in the football market: 'I don't think he was ill at Liverpool and, for me, he didn't produce there' (BBC Television, 2000).

Another Fine Mess: The Symbolic Destruction of Stan Collymore

The 'Collymore Affair' is instructive, in a number of ways. In this conclusion, I want briefly to outline the issues that it raises. First, the episode represents a show of strength by the English football press. This press – and the sports press, generally – operate in a growing and increasingly competitive market. By early 2000 several national daily newspapers were producing stand-alone sports supplements and the English press was collectively disgorging 400,000 words in a single weekend on sport (Buckley, 2000). Football will account for a considerable portion of these words, but, in football discourse, competition is especially fierce. By the middle of any week in the football season, Premiership matches have been shown and/or described by broadcasters and the reflections of many of the protagonists made public. Further information about the Premiership clubs is provided, and renewed daily, via teletext, club-call telephone lines and websites, both official and independent. Then there are the fanzines, specialist football periodicals and television magazine programs. The press, therefore, as in other areas, fall back increasingly on *comment.* This comment is designed, at least in part, to provoke a reaction from the readership, via correspondence pages and telephone lines. The *Mirror,* for instance, invited readers to 'Vote Now for Britain's Most Stupid Footballer', offering two 'phone lines – one for Collymore and one for England player Paul Gascoigne'.

Moreover, the press enjoy far greater scope for extravagant denunciation than broadcasters, who are ordinarily required to observe balance in their reporting. This means the press may often lead the way in defining an event or an individual, with other media, governing bodies and the like agreeing, tacitly, to be bound by their definition. For example, in January 1999 the then England team manager Glenn Hoddle was widely condemned in the football press for apparently suggesting that disabled people might be paying, through their disablement, for mistakes in a past life. His comments had first been made in a radio some months earlier and had provoked no response. However, when they were effectively re-stated in *The Times* (30 January) Hoddle was immediately denounced by the football press. Mainstream broadcasters reported the furore and Margaret Hodge, Minister for the Disabled was among those calling for Hoddle to resign (Wilson, 1999). And *Guardian* columnist Jim White dismissed Hoddle's claims that he'd been misinterpreted. This, argued White, was merely a symptom of the "'Don't Blame Me" syndrome' – a syndrome he would later invoke in the Collymore episode (White, J., 1999: 3). Hoddle quit his job the next day.

These minor moral panics – or 'feeding frenzies' as they are colloquially known – reassert the power of the press as crucial definers of football matters; football people and their affairs, it is implied, are essentially texts, ready to be skewed, this way or that. This acts as a discipline on football institutions, reminding them of the ever-present need for 'good publicity'.

Second, then, once the press campaign has been transacted, Collymore's principal offence becomes defined: it is to have brought bad publicity to his football club, allowing him, and them, to become negative texts. Specifically, he has allowed the press to remind the public how wealthy footballers are and a recurrent press image of the reckless rich of the Premiership betraying their noble, self-denying supporters has been enhanced. In the wake of a press conference in which apologies and tough punishments are proffered, Leicester City place a press statement on their official website:

> Our players wish to make it clear that they fully recognise and appreciate the commitment and magnificent support from our fans through the season, particularly in recent days when many fans have had to make sacrifices to obtain Wembley tickets. The players realise they have let down supporters and the club and wish to make a full and unreserved apology (Leicester City Football Club, 2000)

The following week the club arranges for Collymore to meet Chris Wheeler, a teenage Leicester supporter who has a brain tumour. 'Stan is a really nice bloke', Chris tells the *Leicester Mercury,* 'He is very down-to-earth, and I could talk to him like he is one of my friends' *(Leicester Mercury,* 2000). Thus

a paradigm for discussing the Premiership is reinforced. In this paradigm the issue of the structure of individual reward and the issue of the personal behaviour of those individuals become merged. The (perfectly tenable) argument that these are *separate* issues is implicitly denied. Class relations here are taken as given; the sole issue is how they should be managed.

Third, taking the press treatment of Collymore over the period of a year or so, he becomes trapped in a formidable double bind, half acknowledged in a couple of the newspapers. Initially condemned when he does not accept the boisterous, masculine mores of the dressing room, he is later condemned, with added vehemence, when he does. The discourse of both the Beattie incident and the Collymore saga shows a football world increasingly impatient with talk of mental distress and the medicalisation of social difficulty. The men of this modern professionalised and highly remunerated football world have got to do what they have got to do. Talk of stress threatens the efficiency of the whole enterprise. When Collymore claims to be suffering from clinical depression, his manager, while agreeing to treatment for the player, ultimately rebuts this definition. Collymore cannot be depressed, he says, because he has talent, fame and wealth; men with fewer advantages – who play for Rochdale, perhaps – they might be depressed. To claim depression, in this context, is to deny individual responsibility and this in part explains the strength of the subsequent condemnation of Collymore. When Collymore is defined as mentally distressed, the sports press collude in the general scepticism of the football world. There are jokes about ‘scrambled ego’ and the smart motors in the clinic car park. Later, when Collymore suggests that the fire extinguisher incident, though regrettable, has been exaggerated and, thus, makes a second plea for sympathy, the sports press, in general, remain unfeminised and unforgiving. We told you so, they insist; we said he was bad, not mad.

Finally, this market-driven populism, it should be noted, now appears increasingly to characterise the English sports press as a whole. While, as a recent article in *The Observer* noted, to ‘dole out, ‘SHAME’ and ‘DISGRACE’ in 124-point block capital letters is the lot of tabloid editors’ (Arlidge, 2000: 27), the sports pages of the contemporary broadsheet press are now no less dismissive of socially contextualised explanations. On the contrary, the *Guardian,* an historically liberal paper, whose football reporters showed little interest in the Beattie affair of 1974, maintained a scepticism about Collymore’s depression throughout and, after the hotel incident, led the condemnation of ‘spoiled brats’ (White, 2000).

English football has become, via modern mass communications, one of the most visible forms of work in the world. The terms under which people work in the English football industry, and the vocabulary with which their work is described domestically, are increasingly those of the free market. This vocabulary finds no place for mental distress, the symptoms of which are instead generally seen as signifying self-indulgence and lack of moral fibre. A

sports press visibly dubious in the 1970s has become openly derisive of those cannot cope. Thus, through football discourse, mental illness itself is questioned and workers are taught the disciplines of the market – for example a *Guardian* (2000d: 17) editorial told the teachers' unions that 'Performance pay has not hurt Manchester United'. To adapt Euripides, those whom the modern sports press wish to destroy, they first insist are perfectly sane.

Acknowledgements
For help in collecting material for this article I would like to thank Ian Bent, Galfrid Congreve, Adrian Goldberg, Peter Golding, Alec McAulay, Anne Wagg, Cassie Wagg and Roy Williams. Thanks also to Paul Norcross for commenting on a draft of this article.

REFERENCES

Adams, T. & Ridley, I. (1998). *Addicted.* London: CollinsWillow.
Alexander, J (2000, 14 Feb). Collymore heads for cracking his own conundrum. *The Guardian,* Sport Section p. 3.
Anderson, B. (2000, 17 Feb). Action Pledge. *Leicester Mercury,* p. 60.
Arlidge, J. (2000, 14 May). Share cropper. *The Observer,* p. 27.
Askill, J. & Self, J. (2000, 17 Feb). Colly Runs Riot. *Sun,* pp. 1, 5.
Askill, J., Sullivan, M. & Self, J. (2000, 17 Feb). You Moron, Colly. *Sun,* pp. 1, 4-5.
BBC Television (2000). *Grandstand.* Michale Cole (Ed.). London, 18 March.
Beattie, K. (1998). *The Beat.* Essex: Skript Publishing.
Beckett, A. (1999, 5 July). Gimme shelter. *The Guardian,* p. 2.
Borger, J. (2000, 4 May). Mother executed for killing her children. *The Guardian,* p. 14
Brown, A. & Walsh, A. (1999). *Not for sale.* Edinburgh: Mainstream.
Buckley, W. (2000, 26 March). Paging all sports fans. *The Observer,* Sport Section p. 7
Burn, G. (1984). *Somebody's husband, somebody's son: The story of Peter Sutcliffe.* London: Heinemann.
Gassy, J. (2000, 8 March). Man Utd set to become the world's first £1bn club. *The Guardian,* p. 26
Chandler, N. & Paul, D. (2000, 18 Feb). Year's Booze In One Night/Sick . . . Thick and they even took the mick. *Daily Star,* pp. 1, 4-5.
Clarke, N. (1974, 20 Dec). Rock-a-Bye Beattie Row. Sleepy star is left out of tonight's match. *Daily Mirror,* pp. 26-7.
Clough, F. (1974a, 17 Dec). Beattie Mystery Has Revie In A Stew. *Sun,* p. 27
Clough, F. (1974b, 18 Dec). Don Waits For Kev's Call. *Sun,* p. 27.
Curry, S. (1974a, 19 Dec). Revie Lifts Blues For Beattie. *Daily Express,* p. 16.
Curry, S. (1974b, 20 Dec). No-play Beattie stays in bed. *Daily Express,* p. 14.

Daily Mail (2000, 17 Feb). Stan Collymore: A Diary of Disgrace, p. 94.

Daily Telegraph (2000, 17 Feb). Collymore's Troubles, p. 44.

Davies, C. (2000, 17 Feb). Leicester sent home in disgrace. *Daily Telegraph,* p. 44.

Dicken, P. (1986). *Global shift.* London: Harper and Row.

Doogan, B. (2000, 17 Feb). Another Fine Mess. *The Express,* p. 78.

Driscoll, B. (1974, 18 Dec). I Cannot Play For England! Life's got on top of me. *Sun,* p. 28.

Earle, R. (1999, 31 Jan). Mollycoddle Collymore. *The Observer,* Sport Section p. 5.

Farmer, J. (1974a, 21 Dec). Weller walks out – in mid-match. *Daily Mail,* p. 28.

Farmer, J. (1974b, 24 Dec). Blacklist Weller! Bond plans to block Leicester star's move. *Daily Mail,* p. 32.

Goldberg, A. & Wagg, S. (1991). It's not a knockout: English football and globalisation. In J. Williams & S. Wagg (Eds.), *British football and social change* (pp. 239-53). London: Leicester University Press.

Greechan, J. (2000, 17 Feb). Some things never change...especially footballers let loose by their bosses. *Daily Mail,* p. 95.

Guardian, The (2000a, 18 Dec). A 'shattered' Beattie opts out of match. p. 23.

Guardian, The (2000b, 19 Dec). Notts C make cup history. p. 23.

Guardian, The (2000c, 20 Dec) Kevin Beattie is dropped after missing training. p. 23.

Guardian, The (2000d, 22 April). Pay better teachers more. Editorial, p. 17.

Hall, S. & Jacques, M. (1989). *New times.* London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Harrison, D. & Taylor P. (2000, 5 March). Colly's 5am Bar Brawl. *News of the World,* p. 1.

Horton, E. (1995). *The best World Cup money can buy.* Oxford: Ed Horton.

Kaniuk, R. & Chandler, N. (2000, 17 Feb). Colly's a wally on new team's jolly... *Daily Star,* p. 1.

Ladyman, I. (2000a, 17 Feb). Colly can't stop playing with fire. *Daily Mail,* pp. 94-5.

Ladyman, I. (2000b, 17 Feb). Top players blamed for unruly kids. *Daily Mail,* p. 93.

Lash, S. & Urry, J. (1987). *The end of organised capitalism.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lawton, J. (2000, 17 Feb). Football In Dock... *The Express,* p. 79.

Leicester City Football Club (2000, 17 Feb). Press Release. Retrieved 17 February 2000 from the World Wide Web: http://www.lcfc.co.uk

Leicester Mercury (2000, 23 Feb). Collymore finds new fan. Retrieved 23 February 2000 from the World Wide Web: http:/www. thisisleicestershire.co.uk

Mail on Sunday (2000). The joke's on them... *Night and Day* supplement, pp. 42-4.

Merson, P. & Ridley, I. (1999). *Hero and villain.* London: CollinsWillow.

Miller, D. (1974, 18 Dec). Kevin will miss Don's final test. *Daily Express,* p. 16.

Miller, H. (1974, 19 Dec). You've got the key to the door... *Daily Mirror,* p. 26.

Mitchell, A. & McGowan, B. (2000, 17 Feb). Super Colly's frantic antic, isn't he atrocious? *The Express,* p. 6.

North, N., Hughes, C. & Rock, L. (2000, 17 Feb). Colly's Shame/Stan The Yob. *The Mirror,* pp. 1, 4-5.

Observer, The (1999, 7 Feb). Letters. p. 13.

Powell, J. (1974a, 18 Dec). Why I ran out on England – Beattie explains. I had to see my Mum. *Daily Mail,* p. 32.

Powell, J. (1974b, 23 Dec). Strike, walk-out, bad temper . . . that's no way to get those gold taps on the bath. *Daily Mail,* p. 27.

Quinn, N. (1999, 29 Jan). Stan in a fine mess of his own making. *The Guardian,* Sport Section p. 7.

Ridley, I. (1999, 31 Jan). In defence of Stan. *The Observer,* Sport Section p. 5.

Sadler, J. (2000, 17 Feb). Bad-boy crisis deepens as twit hits the fan. *Sun,* p. 58.

Sedgwick, P. (1982). *Psycho politics.* London: Pluto Press.

Smith, A. (2000, 13 Feb). Mad or sad? Colly is an insecure threat to Leicester. *The Observer,* Sport Section p. 5.

Sugden, J. & Tomlinson, A. (1998). *FIFA and the contest for world football.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Sugden, J. & Tomlinson, A. (1999). *Great balls of fire: How big money is hijacking world football.* Edinburgh: Mainstream.

Taylor, D. (2000, 17 Feb). Collymore's career in the balance. *The Guardian,* p. 34.

Taylor, M. (1997). Proud Preston: A history of the Football League, 1900-1939. Unpublished PhD Thesis, De Montfort University, Leicester.

Thorpe, M. (1999, 25 Jan). Stan out of tune and now out of the door. *The Guardian,* Sport Section p. 1.

Tongue, S. and Shaw, P. (2000, 17 Feb). Collymore named in Spanish bar fracas. *The Independent,* p. 32.

Vamplew, W. (1988). *Pay up and play the game: Professional sport in Britain, 1875-1914.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ward Jouve, N. (1988). *'The Streetcleaner': The Yorkshire Ripper case on trial.* London: Marion Boyars.

Weaver, P. (1999, 27 Jan). When stress rises to the name of the game. *The Guardian,* p. 26.

White, J. (1999 1 Feb). The 'Don't blame me' syndrome. *The Guardian,* p. 3.

White, J. (2000, 17 Feb). Closing ranks behind the spoiled brats for whom self-knowledge is a closed book. *The Guardian,* p. 34

White, P. (1999a, 6 Feb). Gregory talks tough as ‘wasteful’ Collymore prepares to return. *The Guardian,* Sport Section p. 3.

White, P. (1999b, 25 March). Stan on his way out at Villa. *The Guardian,* p. 28.

White, P. (1999c, 7 Nov). Colly breaks his silence. *The Observer,* Sport Section p. 11.

White, P. (1999d, 24 Dec). Collymore rages in vain, *The Guardian,* p. 22.

White, P. & Brodkin, J. (1999, 20 July). Gregory blasts departing Collymore. *The Guardian,* p. 31.

Williams, J. (1999). *Is it all over? Can football survive the Premier League?* Reading: South Street Press.

Wilson, B. (1974, 21 Dec). You Must Shape Up, Kevin. *Sun,* p. 26.

Wilson, J. (1999 1 Feb). Manager should go, says minister. *The Guardian,* p. 3.

Woodward, T. & Gysin, C. (2000, 17 Feb). Will he never learn? Daily Mail, p. 5.

Woolnough, B. (1974, 20 Dec). Fury As Rebel Kevin Does It Again. *Sun,* p. 28.

Wright, D. (1974, 23 Dec). Why Kevin Beattie went home to his Mam. *Daily Mirror,* p. 7.

Yallop, D. (1999). *How they stole the game.* London: Poetic Publishing.