



English National Identity and Football Fan Culture: Who Are Ya?

Tom Gibbons

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In recent years, scholars have understood the increasing use of the St George's Cross by football fans to be evidence of a rise in a specifically 'English' identity. This has emerged as part of a wider 'national' response to broader political processes such as devolution and European integration which have fragmented identities within the UK. Using the controversial figurational sociological approach advocated by the twentieth-century theorist Norbert Elias, this book challenges such a view, drawing on ethnographic research amongst fans to explore the precise nature of the relationship between contemporary English national identity and football fan culture. Examining football fans' expressions of Englishness in public houses and online spaces, the author discusses the effects of globalization, European integration and UK devolution on English society, revealing that the use of the St George's Cross does not signal the emergence of a specifically 'English' national consciousness, but in fact masks a more complex, multi-layered process of national identity construction. A detailed and grounded study of identity, nationalism and globalization amongst football fans, *English National Identity and Football Fan Culture* will appeal to scholars and students of politics, sociology and anthropology with interests in ethnography, the sociology of sport, fan cultures, globalization and contemporary national identities.

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