

Tivoli-Tussen and girls in football kits – Female Fan Cultures in Men’s Football¹

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Abstract:

In this paper we take a close look at gender arrangements in the football stadium, especially at the way female fans do take – and defend – their place in a still male dominated part of society. In contrast to the usual definitions of football fandom who close their eyes to the gender question we do not only argue that there are female fans on the stands, but also that their expressions of fan culture are quite varied and furthermore, can help to illuminate and indeed to some extent undermine some of footballs inherent structures.

1. Going to the game

Petra is on her way to the stadium. As soon as she enters the tube it feels as if she’s already there: She’s one fan amongst fans, everything around her is red and white, excited and ready to party. At the end of the ride, police have cordoned off the platform and are escorting

¹ This article is a translated and slightly abridged version of our contribution to the volume *Arena der Männlichkeit. Über das Verhältnis von Fußball und Geschlecht*, edited by Eva Kreisky and Georg Spitaler and published at German Campus Verlag in 2006.

the group to the stadium. As if by magic, the masses are gender-separated at the turnstiles, because since lately there are different entrances for men and women, that is a bit bothersome actually, because conversations are interrupted and groups get separated. But after being searched, they walk together again. Petra says hello to all her friends and talks to the people standing in the same area. The players come on the pitch and every hassle of the week is instantly forgotten. The only thing that counts is the game ahead. From the stands you can hear: "Ref, you fag." Together with the bratwurst and beer, superstition is being handed around: surely there will be a goal in the next 20 minutes ... and yes, there it is, everyone raises their arms, screams, sings and embraces. Petra is happy, the rest of the world is lost in the moment.

One of the charms of stadium football is the diversity of the fans. Different people from different classes who want only one thing: seeing their team win. The guy in the home kit with all the se-on patches and the guy in the suit, the sales agent in the next seat and the bank manager in the VIP-lounge, the retired dustman and the student. And then there are the many women who also want only one thing: seeing their team win. And just as the men they are different in their way of being a fan. One has twenty scarves knotted around her arms and a beer in one hand, the other girl has the name of her favourite player written on her cheek. One has prepared herself with reading the latest football news on the internet, the next has been drinking in the pub with her pals and another one comes straight from the office.

Why do women and men go to football games? Because they're interested in the game and because they like the atmosphere. A football stadium is a world on its own, it has its own culture and rules and these rules follow a male grammar and are formed according to the football-biography of the young male spectator. There is, at least a temporary exclusion of women through sexism and degradation. It's only the men who piss behind the bus after an away game after all toilets have been made unusable. Now, at the latest, it is nice to have

other women around you to hold up the banner or flag to shield yourselves from looks while you are peeing. On the other hand, it's only the female fans coming alone to the game, who get asked where their boy friend is. Football is a male affair even if there are possibilities for women to make it their thing.²

These are the ground rules which are, more or less, evident in football stadiums in Germany and many other countries of the world. And there are, for men and women alike, different ways to react to these rules, to live with or to challenge them. In this article we will show how women find their places in football fan culture and what kind of strategies they use to be at home at the stadium.³

2. Bawl when you're winning

The stadium can be regarded as part of the education to become a man within the network of society and family. The classical fan career would be as follows: Going to the home ground together with Dad as a young boy (educational objective: competition, winning, being faithful to your club), as a teen gathering with the other boys down at the fence (educational objective: stand up for yourself, punching and shoving, bawling), at the same time collecting your first Panini sticker album (educational objective: stats and facts, impressing others with detailed knowledge), in puberty moving into the stands, while Dad is watching benignly from his seat (educational objective: camaraderie, learning to steer bodily arguments, hard-drinking, body contact between men).⁴ Still later, he is building a

² In recent years the allegedly rapidly growing number of female football fans has become something a favourite topics although it's directed more to further economic target groups than to more equality (cf. Wetzel 2005). In the World Cup year 2006 *Spiegel Online* observed: "The cliché according to which women and football form a natural opposition is outdated by now." (Spiegel-Online 2006) We would claim that the cliché does still enjoy excellent health but that the opposition always was cultural rather than natural.

³ Our use of the word "strategies" is mostly due to the lack of a better one and is not meant to implicate a conscious choice or intentional behaviour of the women and girls in every case.

⁴ This description is explicitly based on proletarian images of masculinity who still have a significance in football. For a more detailed discussion of proletarian values on the terraces see Sülzle 2005.

family, changes back to the seats, women and kids might accompany him from time to time. That's the ideal. But what happens to the women? "I am a part of it just live everyone else", says Conny (20, speech therapist), and she doesn't even sound defiant. She just wants to explain to the interviewer asking after gender differences, that for her and her environment it is a simply natural that Conny is standing on the terraces.⁵

What seems contradictory at first glance, is still true: The terraces are a world of young men and works according to their rules *and* there are possibilities for women to move there quite naturally and accepted. If they want, women get the chance to take a leaf out of the boys' educational guide book. They can try out attitudes and actions usually reserved for men, but which, at least some women feel more kinship with than with the general social demands to their own gender. The girl who has a grasp of the game, can just wear her jersey and be a fan. And sometimes you have to take a very close look to see if there's a male or female body covered by the xxl-garment. In the stadium nobody is bothered if you are swearing and screaming. Women can move undercover in the male dominated fan culture, they can be different – true to the motto "Here I am a fan with all the bells and whistles" – and therefore do what otherwise is defined as male and harshly dismiss everything that is weak and touchy, pink and frilly, i.e. female. The fact that female fans on the terraces do dissociate themselves from women who are more likely to match the female clichés is an important part of fan culture. Cheerleaders in their short skirts are considered just as stupid as so called groupies hanging around the training ground.

Football offers women free spaces not so easily found elsewhere, while at the same time setting very strict limits.

⁵ If not mentioned otherwise all quotes are from the interviews done by Almut Sülzle for her doctoral thesis on women in male preserves. Names and places have been made anonymous.

3. No double-dutch girl

A very common motive in the biographical accounts of long-standing female football fans is something one might call the “tomboy phenomena”: the impression of having been a rather boyish girl, who never much enjoyed activities and behaviour defined as female but rather climbing trees, fighting and of course playing football. “I’ve never really been one of the double-dutch girls” – in this quite charming manner TV hostess Anne Will describes her own gendered sports history in an interview (11Freunde 2004: 72).

There are fan biographies which in the wake of Nick Hornby start with “I was 11 years old when I went to the stadium for the first time ...”, even for many female fans.⁶ One recurring element of this kind “successful” football socialisation according to the male pattern is the conscious and unconscious neglecting of one’s own aberrance from the female ideal, of not behaving, dressing, being “like a girl”. In *Watching the Boys Play* 30-year-old Paula describes how, when switching to secondary school, the world of her all-girls football team (a really ground-breaking project in the early 70s) and the gender rules in school and society collide:

“Then I realized that it’s two different worlds really. Before that there was only the one – mine. But with the girls in my class I had nothing in common, and that never changed during school. ‘What kind of silly prunes are they?’ was what I was thinking. They were so stupid with their *Bravos* [a German youth magazine], when I had my *Kicker* [the German football magazine] to read every Monday ...” (Selmer 2004: 42)

Paulas obvious irritation with her classmates results in her fighting it out with the boys until they are ready to let her join the football game and exchange football stickers during the break. Later on in life the ways by which female fans manage to earn respect usually are

⁶ Cf. Wetzel 2000 and Selmer 2004. Contrary to Nick Hornbys account and experience it is not always the father who is the first companion into the stadium, but even mother or grandmother can lay the ground work for an enduring love of football (see for example de Schryver 2000 and Selmer 2004: 29–33.)

somewhat different. To gain access to the football world a certain measure of competence is necessary – competence which is nearly automatically ascribed to men and likewise automatically denied to women.⁷ But if by regular presence at the game, competent comments on the line-up, the new coach or historical football events women give the impression of being really and truly interested, that might result in the grudging observation: “Hey, considering you’re a girl, you really know your stuff”. In that way the doors to the boys’ club do open and you are raised from being a women to being a fan.

An important although not necessary moment of the classical, and that is: male, football socialisation is the active play. This might be the area where – at least in Germany – one can observe that the insistence of the incompatibility of women and football has been most strongly disrupted. The success of the women’s national team and the following increase of girls and women playing football in the clubs have gone quite a long way to making the combination of women and football more self-evident and natural.⁸

This development will hopefully make life easier for girls like Paula cited above and let them choose their interests and activities not along the gender boundaries but rather according their own wishes.⁹ When there are four girls in one class playing football, chances are they’ll feel less alone than only one. The kicking girls growing up today who take an interest in their own and men’s football and who know the line-ups of the Bundesliga teams

⁷ Evidently, no comment is stupid enough to become outdated eventually. Even German Chancellor Angela Merkel was questioned on the offside-rule in an interview with *Bild am Sonntag*. She answered with the remark that a male politician wouldn’t have been asked these things even though “many didn’t have any detailed knowledge” and a simple but to-the-point drawing (*Bild am Sonntag* 2006: 5).

⁸ Clear signals of more acceptance for girls’ and women’s football are the existence of a special portal on the website of the German Football Federation DFB (www.dfb.de) or the growing attention for the subject within the science of sports like for example the “study group girls’ football” (<http://www.sbc-fischer.de/forschungsgruppe/index.htm>).

⁹ This is, by the way, true not only for girls with an enthusiasm for football, but also for boys who rather want to dance than to kick a ball.

will not break down the traditional gender structure of the football fan culture, but they might manage to rock the boat a bit.¹⁰

4. Sexism

In football many female fans ignore misogynist occurrences or make light of them, even though they would never accept those same occurrences in any other part of their social life.¹¹ “Of course, I’ve heard words like ‘cunt’, but not addressed to me” – is what one female fan says (Selmer 2004: 92). If we substitute “cunt” by “nigger” or “faggot”, the problem becomes evident. Even then she would not have been the recipient, but would have interpreted the comment as racist or homophobic. Obviously, the fact of not being personally addressed but nevertheless implicated, makes it more difficult to properly perceive and label discriminations.

Being an emotionally involved female football fan does influence your powers of observation, not only in regard to the rightfulness of cards or send-offs against your team, but also when it comes to the awareness of sexist remarks. By accepting or making light of misogynist structures female fans do – consciously or not – give further proof that they themselves are part of football as a male world and accept its rules. An important feature here is the feeling of belonging, of being at home on the ground, which is an integral part of the whole culture of fandom. For female fans there are some very good reasons to ignore sexist comments, because what would it mean for women who love football, who support their team and want to be part of the game, to react to those comments? What would it mean to take serious, that your presence and competence is questioned before you have even said one

¹⁰ In how far women’s football as a spectator sport will form its own fan culture remains a further subject for research.

¹¹ This observation – based on interviews – can be found in Selmer 2004 and Wetzel 2000. Naturally there are also critical discussions and struggles against sexism in the fan scene itself. The “Action against stupid lines” at FC St. Pauli which resulted in the banning of sexist remarks in the stadium rules, is one example in point.

word? That players are insulted by being labelled as a “girl”? To take that seriously and even more so to see it as referring to yourself means is in fact a renouncement of a very important element of football: being part of it, belonging, feeling at home and welcome in the stadium. If you as a woman on the terraces criticise sexist occurrences, that might be signing off your status as fan. Discriminating comments or actions do draw a line, they invoke in- and exclusions. Especially in situations where women are not personally addressed, but do recognize sexism as such and therefore choose to *feel* addressed, they are making the lines and borders more visible by pointing them out and protesting against them.

5. Groupies – Shrieking victims of commercialization?

Groupies are an uncontested all-female character part in the football theatre ensemble and the one confronted with the most prejudices: Groupies, it is said, are no real fans, not interested in football, but rather in football players, and therefore at best ignorant victims, at worst dangerous allies of commercialization, the plague that has turned the game into an event, the player into a pop star. Football groupies bring elements of rock and pop culture into the stadium and on the training ground. They collect pictures, autographs and stories, besiege the hotel, home and club house of their idol, send him letters and emails, want to see him and touch him. And there might even be the one or other fainting fit behind the corner flag.

While not being entirely new this phenomenon has been strongly supported from the beginning of the 90s by a media coverage in which the private live, the looks and the image of the players are taking more and more space. The economically motivated opening up of the field of football for the pop and show business results in the upcoming of new and different ways of access to this field: The discursive currency in which football is traded has changed and consists now not only in stats, away games or tactical debates, but also in personal in-depth interviews, hair cuts or the players’ marital status. These areas of discussion are

devaluated within the dominating fan culture and remain therefore for the most part exclusively female. For women and girls, on the other hand, they offer the possibility to enter the stadium through the backdoor of star-struckness. By rules and patterns learned at other places (i.e. pop culture) they gain access to an area where normally there exists a totally different pattern of behaviour. Many of those groupies are not really interested in subscribing to the rules of “real football fandom”, but feel quite content in their “shrieking corner”¹².

But one can also observe the co-existence of the traditional, male and the modern/pop cultural female matters of access, for example in the digital guest books or forums of players' websites. The comments left there do to the most part come from users with female nick names – a very unusual occurrence in the online football universe.¹³ But besides to be expected groupie elements along the lines of “I think you're sooo cute” the comments contain other more surprising features: Whereas the few male users make decidedly fact-orientated observations on the last match, the lacking form or injury of Kevin or Arne, the female users do, simply put, post texts with “you” and “I” as the most frequent words. But these texts that concentrate on the relationship between writer and player do contain the message that “she” watches “him” regularly in the stadium because she has a season ticket, that he is her role model when she's playing in her girls' team or that she has read in the *Kicker*, that he threatens to leave the club and how could he ever think of doing such a thing?¹⁴ In other words, totally “normal” and expected attitudes of a football fan which do at least suggest that the groupie culture is not that far from the football fan culture as common stereotyping likes

¹² This nicely-phrased term can be found in Kathrin Kipps M.A. theses on football fans Reutlingen (Kipp 1998: 47).

¹³ Like Fritsch and Schwier show the internet appearances of fan clubs and action groups place much value on internal distinction from each other, but do at the same time construct “almost invariably the male subject as the authentic, ‘real’ football fan” (Fritsch/Schwier 2003: 140).

¹⁴ For more detailed quotes from the official website of Bundesliga pros Arne Friedrich and Kevin Kuranyi see Selmer 2004: 126–128.

to have it. Just because you're shrieking instead of bawling doesn't mean you have nothing else in common with "real" football fans.

A rather different matter are those girls and women who are not content with collecting an autograph or posting a comment on their favourite player's website. The (real or imagined) extramarital affairs of football stars are referred to in different ways, from the quite gracious "party girl" to simple "slut". The public awareness of them started in the 60s with the first football pop star, George Best, but in spite of the frequent press coverage even this aspect of groupiedom remains rather in the dark, at least the motives and attitudes of the female part in it.¹⁵ One of the very few interesting observations in this context can be found in Ronald Reng's book *The Keeper of Dreams* on goal keeper Lars Leeses time in the English League: "Some girls turn it into a strange kind of hunting experience. Like small boys in school collect football stickers by Panini they collect sex with football pros. The players themselves don't seem to be that important here. 'For these girls the players were like trophies und didn't even realize it', says Daniela Leese." (Reng 2002: 146)

In this comment by Leeses wife male and female "fan culture" are interlinked, and – quite contrary to the sensational reports on groupies and prostitutes in training camps – all of a sudden it is the men who become objects, who get circulated and switched around without even knowing about it. Even if it certainly can't claim to be a general truth this observation offers a refreshingly different perspective on the "radical groupies" by not explaining them in a psychological or even pathological way. Only if the women are considered as acting subjects, their possible profit – emotional, sexual and material – can be taken into account in order to generate a more complex picture on the story of "The pro and the party girl".

¹⁵ A impressive example here is an article on the football magazine *Rund* from October 2005 which pretends to tackle the subject "groupie" (in the sense of girls who are sexual available for footballers). The article quotes many male "experts", from football players, who don't themselves admit to having affairs but just rely on hearsay, to sociologists and former tabloid journalists who accuse the football scene of bigotry. The women themselves don't get a word in however but simply get depicted in a huge photo spread (Greulich/Schäfer 2005).

6. Body check – female voyeurs on the terraces

Probably one of the most common motives in our culture is that of a sparsely dressed, attractive woman, presented for the male gaze. The European national male sport football undermines this constellation: Here it is the men who publicly present their carefully formed and trained bodies and their abilities. However you can't accuse the powers that be in the football business of deliberately trying to deconstruct the patriarchal regime of gazes, quite the opposite, in fact. The possibility of a voyeuristic consummation of the game (and the players) has no place in the traditional football culture. In his article "Big Defence: Sport and Hegemonic Masculinity" cultural theorist David Rowe describes the perception of male footballers by the prototype male viewer as "an uneasy confinement of the male gaze to the nominally de-sexualised spheres of technique, camaraderie and emotion." (Rowe 1997: 125) This gaze, that is kept in its track by the homophobia inscribed to football, can get intercepted by other gazes: that of the female (and gay) spectators.¹⁶

A comment remindful of these gazes ("He is quite cute, isn't he." "Those jerseys are really slim-fit" or even "Why don't you pick up jogging again, darling?") is not all that well-liked in football contexts. At the same time, women who are watching football, invariably make the experience that they are alleged to only watch football because they want to watch attractive male bodies. The implication in this allegation is for the first that male fans don't do that, for the second that fans *in general* don't do that and thirdly that a female-voyeuristic gaze inevitably is clouded by complete ignorance in regard to the game itself.¹⁷ The reaction of female fans to this attitude varies: There are not a few who hold the opinion that comments

¹⁶ For a discussion of professional football's fear of homoerotic gazes and gestures – not to mention real-life gays and lesbians – see Eggeling 2005 and Heidele 2005.

¹⁷ Referring to written sources from Austria Matthias Marschik (2003: 101f.) argues that the, as he calls it, "character difference" between women and football is not contested in recent time only but rather a phenomena linked to the rise of football to a sports for the masses in the 20s of the last century.

on the looks of a player are disreputable and therefore undermine their own status as woman in the football world. For other girls or women do play the “voyeur card” just to provoke the boys and disclose their disapproval as simple envy. A tactic that is even more funny and rewarding when used in groups – the all-female fan club of 1. FC Köln, “Always Ultras Cologne”, let the female fans in the stadium vote for the “Mr. FC Köln” among the players and presented the winner with sash and certificate as if he were a derby-winning horse. This way to offensively tackle prejudices against female fans is by now also been commercially exploited. Every self-respecting women’s magazine offers a “Vote the sexiest player” during big tournaments – a feature that a likewise self-respecting football magazine would never dream of doing.

7. Best of both worlds

Between affirming the dominant fan culture with its concentration on line-up, beer and choreographies on the stands and the digression to topics purportedly “alien” to the real fan culture, there is a third way: the combination of both elements which might in fact be in accordance with the life of quite many female fans. “If there is another girl watching who doesn’t know so much about the game, you go ‘Hey, check out his hair cut’ with her, and directed to the other side you say different things, comment the tactics and so on.” This is how one of the interviewees in *Watching the Boys Play* describes the “janus-headed” behaviour of the happy female voyeur who at the same time is and wants to be a football expert (Selmer 2004: 65). In just this way we can understand the coexistence of autograph-collecting and *Kicker* reading described above: it is the attempt to escape from the constriction of

stereotypes, to decide to shape your own football fandom. This is how the “TivoliTussen”¹⁸, an all-female fan club of Alemannia Aachen, see their website:

“a platform on which being a girl and a fan of Alemannia can be combined without meeting a genetically based ignorance. In other words where we at the same time can discuss about ‘Ref, you idiot, no way was that offside’ and ‘Nice ass, don’t you think?’ without having to cope with spiteful laughter or bemused head-shaking.”

(<http://www.tivolitussen.de/1.html>)

8. Women’s power: female fan clubs

Fans on the terraces are organised in more or less loose (standing) groups, gangs or fan clubs with blurred transitions between those. Often, a fan club is started by a group of friends or through common secondary interests or traits like the same place of residence, job or political position. Not rarely those fan clubs are all-male and which to remain so. A, at first glance, feminist reaction to male dominance is the establishment of solely female groups. Gender-homogenous fan clubs are not unusual in football, but female ones still are. The women organised in Frankfurt club “EFC Frieda” do therefore on their website lay down not only their football interest but also some of their thoughts beyond that: “One main point in forming a women’s fan club is sending out a signal against the still existing prejudice that women are not interested in football.” (18.01.2006, http://de.geocities.com/efcfrieda/frieda_story.htm). The fan club women want to establish a sort of publicity for female fans, to make them visible and fight against prejudices. The “Red-Black Crazy Girls” (founded in 1997) in Nuremberg do challenge a certain image of women they do obviously meet in their own football world: “Our motive at that time simply was to

¹⁸ The name “TivoliTussen” combines the nickname of the Alemannia Aachen stadium, the “Tivoli”, with the term “Tussen” which can be translated as “chicks”.

show that there are girls who go to football for the cause and not because they just get dragged along as an appendage of some guy or because they want to admire the players' calves." (18.01.2006, <http://www.red-black-crazy-girls.de>). Not surprisingly that women who actually do admire the one or other player get themselves a sceptical comment from the Red-Black Crazy Girls: "For us it is important to be perceived as 'normal' football fans. Each one of us follows football because we love our club and are interested in the game. We want nothing to do with shrieking pubescent girls who have a crush on players." (ibid.).

Many female fans do feel the need to distance themselves from feminism. The 34-year-old founder of a female fan club in Offenbach (housewife and mother of two children) says: "We do behave quite normally, just as we are, I mean we are not feminists. We do say for example that you can bring your partner to the game. We don't want to be a dykes' club." (quoted from Wetzel 2000: 89). The reason to form the club did in other words not stem from a feminist background but, even more courageously, she wanted to create space for women even though that might bring an unwelcome association. with a feminist or lesbian movement.

9. Irony and subversion: Tits on tour

Social movements often start by claiming disparaging labels for themselves and thus give them new and positive meaning. Examples here are the former invectives "gay" or "black". If such a revaluation is successful, even the social devaluations might have to be renegotiated having lost their vocabulary. One can observe this strategy in the account of Isabella who explains the origin of her fan club's name, "Tits away". Isabella (21, management assistant and member of a gender-mixed ultra group) was invited to become a member of the already existing women's fan club. She admits to have found the name a bit irritating at first, although:

“[I liked] the motive behind it: girls who go to football meeting and getting themselves organised. By now I also like the name, if you interpret *tits* simply as ‚women‘, ‚self-confident women‘ maybe (laughs) and *away* is quite right since we always are at the away games, one of us has been to every game for years now.”

She simply translates *tits* into “self-confident women” and in this way unsettles the sexist mindset in her environment: “Normally you do hear a lot of silly remarks from the boys if you go to the stadium as a woman if you’re not ... well, let’s say, established or part of a group where you can sort of hide.” The “Tits” are established and had their club’s name printed on figure-cut white blouses – an idea arising from a booze-up and at the same time another conscious provocation, since blouses are perceived as too girly and white clothing in general as much too vain for football. Dressed in this way the women do appear on their usual place on the terraces and the boys are speechless: “You don’t hear any more stupid comments, they just don’t come up with anything and then they might actually start to think.” By anticipating the sexism¹⁹, the women succeed in undermining it and maybe even in changing the boys’ minds. This strategy however works only under the presumption of being accepted in the field respectively on the terraces (Isabella is the “stats queen” in her stand and takes every bet on football knowledge) and a certain power that lies in numbers: “It’s different if you’re on your own, you get funny looks from everyone, from the cop to the ‚normal‘ fan and of course from the other girls.” Because not all female fans in the stadium react positively to the „tits“-blouses: “Girls can react quite aggressively (laughs), actually they are having a bigger problem with it than the boys. They say, if you debase yourselves to that, to ... tits, so to say, it’s no wonder there’s more sexism. Well, admittedly they don’t say that if we are five girls together. We do have a feeling of power if we make our appearance together, all dressed

¹⁹ We have developed the term of the „anticipated sexism” along the lines of the “subversive affirmation” of the communication guerrilla (cf. Blisset/Brünzels 1997)

in blouses. You are a group, who is going to argue with you?"

The strategy of the anticipated sexism can be perceived even in the naming of other female fan clubs like the "Hooligänse"²⁰ (1860 München), the brown-white "Milchschnitten"²¹ of St. Pauli or the "TivoliTussen" from Alemannia Aachen.²² They do fall into line with the widely spread use in the football fan scene of provocative negative self-styling as proletarian, violent underdogs, rather than with, let's say, feminist orientated band names in the Riot-Grrrl-style.

10. Champagne or beer

Our ramble the various female fan cultures in men's football has shown that there are many different ways in which women choose to live and shape the football event. Female daily fan life consists of many different elements, one non-negotiable part being the struggle with the culture of masculinity that dominates football. The strategies in this struggle vary: from pointed ignorance to adaptation, ironic subversion or open challenge. One can on the one hand observe an approach to traditional football culture, on the other the transferring of attitudes and patterns from the field of pop culture onto the pitch. Both do present a challenge to the football establishment: Women who just want to be "one of the lads" and shrieking girls for whom nothing could farther from their minds.

The range of female fan cultures we have described shows that these elements (and others) can be combined in many different ways: girls with a crush reading the *Kicker* magazine, football-versed experts checking out the players' asses, women in the heart of the

²⁰ The literal translation of "Hooligänse" would be "Hooligeese", the term plays on the meaning of the German word "Gans" (contained also in Hooligans) which is "goose".

²¹ "Milchschnitte" is a sweet sold in Germany with the colours brown-white the club colours of St. Pauli, whereas "Schnitte" is a derogatory term for a girl or woman.

²² The gay-lesbian fan clubs with their rather homogenous naming as "Hertha-" or "StuttgarterJunxx" seem quite pale in comparison.

terraces deciding to form all-female fan clubs without wanting anything to do with feminism, “Hooligänse” and “TivoliTussen”. The gender order on the stands threatens to falter in those cases where the alleged opposites of fan and woman, tradition and commercialization, beer and champagne, shrieking and bawling get blurred. And perhaps it is exactly this oscillation between different poles which constitutes the diversity of female fan culture and makes it different from male fan tradition.

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