

Fútbol; Rivalry and Fan Identification in Rosario, Argentina

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I. Abstract

Argentina is one of the world's best known football countries and it is the passion and devotion of the fans in combination with fierce local rivalries that makes Argentine football unique. The derby between Newell's Old Boys and Rosario Central is considered to be one of the fiercest in Argentina. As two of the oldest teams in Argentine football, they have a shared history of playing against each other during a period of over a hundred years. This thesis is an effort to research the identity construction and identification processes of a fan community. It discusses who the Newell's Old Boys fans are, what shapes their fan identity and how do they express their fanship nowadays. To understand the rivalry, this thesis explains that it has historically been constructed by the crossing of several historical fracture lines crossing each other on the geographical level (historical link with neighborhoods) and socio-economical level (elite vs. working class). Although describing four categories of fans within the Newell's fan community, the thesis mainly focuses on the die-hard fans, who strongly identify with the club. The article shows how fan identification is based on the club's cultural identity and the loyalty of the fan community.

Keywords: *Football, Fanship, Social Identity, Newell's, Rivalry, Symbolism, History, Argentina*

II. Acknowledgements

Although it was the third stay for me in Latin America, this was actually the first time I arrived and stayed at the scene on my own. Difficulties one usually has when adapting to a foreign culture and language are even more difficult to overcome when one is alone, not able to rely on people who are on the scene coping with the same difficulties. I relied on the local people to make my stay as comfortable as possible and to keep my research going. Now, writing this piece, I can say that ‘we’ succeeded.

Rosario and its people have not let me down and in return I want to thank them for that.

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1. Introduction

Argentina is a country ruled by football, with passionate people loving the game unconditionally. This passion is nicely caught in the following quote:

“The love Argentines share for the game is immense... So immense that the Argentines call ‘the ball’ *la pelota* instead of *el balón*, what the Spaniards use to say. The ball is a woman, and one needs to treat her with the best possible care”

(Brouwer & Zoutberg, 2003)

Argentina is one of the most famous football countries. This is not only because of the international successes of the national team and the major clubs. It is the passion and devotion of the fans that makes Argentine football unique. My passion for the game in combination with my desire to go to Argentina sparked my interest to conduct a research which would not only be original and educative, but also fun and interesting. Eventually I ended up in Rosario, the third largest city in Argentina after capital city Buenos Aires and Córdoba. The city is located over 280 kilometers northwest of Buenos Aires on the shore of the Paraná river and has approximately 910.000 residents (2005 census, *Municipalidad de Rosario*), which means it is the largest city in the province of Santa Fe. The city of Rosario as the head city of the Department of Rosario is considered to be an important industrial city.

Rosario hosts several football teams, but only two teams have played a role of importance in the history of Argentine football. Rosario Central and Newell’s Old Boys both play in the *Primera División*, the highest Argentine football league and their matches are known as *el clásico Rosarino*. Other teams in Rosario are second division team Tiro Federal, Club Atlético Central Córdoba (playing in the third division) and Club Atlético Argentino, playing in the fourth division

The derby between Newell’s Old Boys and Rosario Central is considered to be one of the fiercest in Argentina. As two of the oldest teams in Argentine football, they have a shared history of playing against each other during a period of over a hundred years. The first *clásico* was played the 18th of June in 1905. Newell’s won that game by 1-0. Since that date, there have been 248 official recorded games of which Rosario won 82 matches, lost 72 times and tied 92 times. In two games, both teams lost due to riots and violence. That the classic of Rosario can be seen as a very tight game can be seen in the statistics over the last thirty years. Both teams have won exactly 22 times and tied 41 times up until the 2008 *clausura* tournament (Carlos Durhand, 2008)

As the Argentine football league consists out of two tournaments each year - namely the *apertura* and the *clausura* - in which all teams play against each other once in every tournament, the *clásico Rosarino* takes place at least twice a year, making the rivalry a permanent feature of living in Rosario. Because of the presence of one single derby between two local giants and the presence of two large fan communities— especially in comparison to the many teams and communities based in Buenos Aires -; Rosario is footballistically polarized and seems the ideal stage to put an anthropological view on the wonderful world of football. This makes the local fan communities an excellent subject to study identity constructions and expressions of identification in the context of a local rivalry.

This thesis is therefore an effort to research the identity construction and identification processes of a fan community. Due to time limits and accessibility reasons, I focused my self on the Newell's old boys fan community. The central research problem questions who the Newell's Old Boys fans are, what shapes their fan identity and how do they express their fanship nowadays. The entire thesis is written within the context of the *clásico Rosarino*.

Research was carried out within the boundaries of qualitative research and took place in Rosario between February and June 2008. I used a large variety in qualitative research methods. Over four months I held small talks on a daily base with fans on every location possible. These conversations took place in many bars, birthday parties, restaurants, parks, on the streets and of course in and around the stadium. During the fieldwork period I hung out with journalists and historians, I met many fanatic fans, giving me access to their memories and private collections of papers and magazines (archival research) and photos and videos (audiovisual media research). They invited me within different settings: at home, at work, at typical Argentine *asados* (barbeques), at football related meetings and fan gatherings. I became part of the Newell's fan community and attended to every possible game, including the famous *clásico Rosarino* at Rosario Central's stadium Gigante de Arroyito. Participating observation was therefore the most important research tool resulting in this article.

The paragraphs in this thesis all discuss various themes, ranging from the structure of the fan community, the origin of the rivalry up until present day fan expressions. Considering the introduction as the first paragraph, the second paragraph gives an overview of current approaches to identity and identification and an overview of theories on sports, rivalry, fanship and fan identification in social sciences. The third paragraph gives an overview of the history of football in Argentina, emphasizing on different phases in which links with politics and neighborhood became established, creating the conditions for many football rivalries. Before turning to the *clásico Rosarino*, the fourth paragraph provides an introduction the Newell's Old Boys fan community. The fifth paragraph discusses the

historical roots of the derby in Rosario, analyzing the rivalry through an historical and societal perspective based on the three historical fracture lines (Giulianotti, 1999), and shows how this has developed over time. The sixth and last paragraph preceding the conclusion discusses what shapes Newell's Old Boys fan identity nowadays and attempts to link fan identification with symbolism (the usage and meaning of songs, art, artifacts and attributes), fan loyalty, regionalism and club history and heroes.

2. Theoretical Framework

Football is the world's most popular game. On streets and pitches everywhere around the globe, children, men and women are playing one of the most accessible sports out there. It is hard to find people who do not have an opinion of the game, some people hate it, and many people love it. Some people play themselves, some might never have. Football plays a role in many people's lives, for some it even becomes their life. Playing football is a physical expression, being a fan however, involves many other expressions. Supporting a national or a local team provokes many other sentiments on a patriotic, historical, political, cultural or even religious level.

Fanship is therefore linked with identity and identification, supporting a team and expressing ones loyalty and dedication for a club involves many identity related issues. Being a fan of a certain team is part of who you are; one belongs to a group, which is perceived different than the group of fans of another team. Many of the world's biggest rivalries are a result of conflicting groups and identities. Argentina – England for example is not merely a match, fans consider the pride of their countries at stake as a result of the Falkland War in the early 1980s. The Scottish 'Old Firm' between Celtic and the Glasgow Rangers is a clash between the Irish (Celts) orientated Catholics and the British orientated protestant community. In the 'Derby of the Galaxy', Real Madrid symbolizes the Spanish crown, while Barcelona represents the nationalist Catalans of the region that historically has not been recognized by Madrid as an independent state. Argentina's most notorious clash is the game between Buenos Aires based giants Boca Juniors and River Plate. While the latter is stereotypically seen as the team representing the right wing radicals, Boca Juniors are representing the leftist Peronists.

As my research focuses on the expression of identity and identification by football fans of a team which is involved in such a famous, yet local rivalry, it is important to explore the concept of identity. Therefore this paragraph seeks to introduce the concept of identity. This will be done in the upcoming section. What is identity in anthropological and sociological research and how can this be linked with football fans? The second section focuses on the use of the identity concept in sociological and anthropological studies about sports and fanship.

2.1 Approaches to Identity and Identification

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, identity is "who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group which make them different from others". In Social Sciences the concept of identity has had many different meanings in recent decades. Originally, it meant "sameness", and in psychology this

sameness meant “selfsameness”. Identity in this discipline was understood as a combination of basic personality features acquired mostly during childhood and, once integrated, more or less fixed (Sokefeld, 1999). In social anthropology, the concept “identity” was used mainly in the context of ethnicity and “ethnic identity”. Here, identity does not refer to the selfsameness of an individual, but to the “sameness of the self with others”. This means the consciousness of sharing several characteristics (language, culture, religion, etc.) within a group. This consciousness made up a group’s identity (Sokefeld, 1999). In the social identity theory, the same conclusion is drawn: “A social identity is a person’s knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group” (Hogg and Abrams, 1988). Also Larrain (2000) has a similar argument as according to him individuals define themselves or identify themselves with some qualities in terms of some shared social categories. In forming a personal identity, most individuals share group characteristics such as religion, age, gender, social class, political background and ethnicity.

My research focuses mainly on group identity. In this case, football fans can be seen as a social group, with fans of different teams as different groups, emerging from different backgrounds and shared histories. According to Stets and Burke (2000), a social group is a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category.

Everyone belongs to numerous social groups on several levels of identity. These exist on various levels, from small groups (micro level), such as families or colleagues, to larger social categories. These categories can further be distinguished on the meso level (communities, towns, sub nationalities), the macro level (nations, nationalities, language groups) and even the global level (Europeans, socialists, etc.) To some groups, one is born (nationality, ethnicity), to other’s ones belonging is voluntarily (football fan community, working team, etc.). Some people even identify with some of their groups and develop an inner bond and loyalty to them. If people identify strongly with the group they belong to, one is more likely to achieve the group’s goals (if behaving on behalf of the group), are more likely to help other group members, are less likely to leave their group and discriminate more strongly against others (Riketta, 2008).

In the social identity theory, sociologists discuss three components of social identity; the social psychological component, the system component and the societal component. The social psychological component explains the motivational processes that are responsible for a type of intergroup discrimination known as social competition (Turner, 1975). Social competition is a behavioral identity management strategy that may be used to change the status positions of the in-group and/or out-group in order to create or protect high in-group status. The need for self-esteem is thought to motivate group members to adopt this strategy of social competition (Blanz, Mummendey, Mielke, & Klink, 1998; Van

Knippenberg, 1989; geciteerd in Rubin, 2003). This component aims to explain *why* people show social competition

The system component qualifies the social psychological component by setting out the conditions under which social competition will and will not occur. According to Rubin (2003), the system component specifies three socio-structural variables: (a) the *permeability* of group boundaries, (b) the *stability* of the intergroup status system, and (c) the *legitimacy* of the intergroup status system. According to Tajfel and Turner (1979, p.45, cited in Rubin, 2003) the system component predicts that social competition will only occur when group boundaries are impermeable and the intergroup status system is unstable and illegitimate. This component aims to explain *when* people show social competition.

The former two components explain general processes which apply across all group members and all social systems (Billig, 1996, p. 346; Wetherell, 1982, cited in Rubin, 2003). The societal component is in fact the specific societal context in which the former two components manifest themselves. The societal component therefore aims to explain *how* (or in what way) people show social competition

Social identities are mainly constructed through two important processes, which are called self-categorization and social comparison (Hogg and Abrams, 1988). Self-categorization means that the self (the individual) can take itself as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories or classifications (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell, 1987). The consequence of self-categorization is that the individual strengthens its feeling of belonging to a certain group by focusing on the similarities between the individual and the other in-group members while on the other hand focusing on the differences between the individual and others who do not belong to the group. On the individual level, this means that one is reflecting positively on it self in comparison to other individuals who do not belong to the group. On the group level, this means that the individual focuses on its similarities with the other in-group members. This focus occurs for all the concepts and properties that can be used for the categorization of people in groups. In this research this is also applicable on different groups of football fans and categorizing them by club, neighborhood, social class, political preference, club loyalty and dedication.

The second process is the social comparison process. Within this process, the individual selectively evaluates the insider and outsider group, primarily focusing on those categories (of preferences, abilities, appearances etc.) that will result in positive outcomes for the individual. This means that one's self-esteem, as a subjective dimension of identity, is enhanced by evaluating both the image and status of the individual's group as the outsiders group, resulting in a positive judgment for

the group in which the individual finds itself and a negative judgment for the out-group (Hogg and Abrams, 1988). As the first process, the social comparison process also focuses on the out-group, but this time on the group as a whole in comparison to the in-group as a whole. Both processes indicate the need of the people for identity. Vignoles et al. (2006) concluded that the most important motives underlying the construction of social identities are the needs for self-esteem, distinctiveness, belongingness, meaning, continuity, and efficacy.

The feeling of attachment to a social group is called (social) identification. Many definitions exist on this phenomenon, but basically all come down to a subjective link between a person's membership in a group and the person's self-concept (Riketta, 2005). Riketta (2008) sees identification as need fulfillment and recognizes affective and cognitive aspects. The cognitive aspects of identification depend more on fixed characteristics and shared beliefs on the group and the self. To some groups one chooses to belong (fan community, working environment), to other groups one is born into (mainly defined by physical characteristics, such as age, ethnicity, etc.). This cognitive identification may even occur if the group fails to fulfill one's needs. However, whether one develops affective ties to a group or not, may largely depend on one's personal preferences and attitudes toward the group, which in turn may strongly depend on what the group contributes (or promises to contribute) to one's personal needs. The philosophy that one belongs to some groups since birth is derived from essentialism, which on its turn is opposing constructivism. Social constructivism is widely spread in the field of social sciences and involves in the field of identity construction the philosophy that some social phenomena, like identities, clearly do not have essences, as the groups –to which one is born into according to essentialism- are also socially constructed (Sayer, 1997).

2.2 Approaches to Sports, Fanship, Rivalry and Fan Identification

Catherine Palmer (2002) discusses in her article "Introduction: Anthropology and Sport", that sports and anthropology is a recent phenomenon:

“Despite its capacity to generate meaning, to facilitate debate and to tap into social, political and economic conditions, sport has nonetheless hovered on the margins of the discipline. Up until the 1960s, when anthropologists came across people playing sport in their fieldwork, the activity was largely treated as a peripheral concern, rather than as a central focus of inquiry”.

Earlier studies of sporting phenomena mainly focused on non-Western sports and experiences. Since the 1990s, the number of studies on Western sports, athletes and phenomena's. Some studied bodybuilding (Klein, 1993), Aerobics (Markula, 1995), Cycling (Palmer, 1996), American College Football (Foley, 1990, Sands, 1999), while in Latin America Pablo Alabarces studied football fans, while Eduardo Archetti studies masculinity in sports in Argentina (1999).

In Latin America, Football related studies mainly discuss topics like hooliganism and the involvement of politics in football. Duke and Crolley (2001) as well as Ray (2004) argue that Argentinean football has historically been linked with politics, from the arrival in the late 19th century when British immigrants brought the game to the Southern cone up until today. They claim that there is a distinct visible link between politics, football and community and in several parts of their essay they relate to the emergence of rivalry because of the earlier mentioned link. Duke and Crolley (1999) also wrote about Argentinean football rivalry and political links resulting in violence and hooliganism.

On rivalry and identity less is written, although some useful studies have been done that can contribute to my thesis. According to Halberstadt, O'Shea and Forgas (2006);

“Allegiance to sports teams is one of the most common and powerful social experiences for many individuals. People derive some of their self-esteem from the sports teams they support”.

They argue that if people see a sports team as being part of their in-group the team's performance has a significant consequence on the individuals self-esteem and it's sense of a positive social identity. Hirt (1992) also wrote on this subject and agrees that during his study about fans of university basketball teams, the fans of winning teams rated their own self-esteem and likelihood of success in the future higher than the fans of losing teams. These effects should be especially strong in sporting events involving traditional rivals (Halberstadt, O'Shea & Forgas,2006). Rosario Central and Newell's Old Boys can be seen as such traditional rivals.

Most research involving fanship is conducted in relation with the effects of being a sports fan. However, little is known about the motives for identifying with a certain sport or a certain team. Although this hasn't been fully explored yet, some anthropologists have made an effort to link identity with football. Archetti (1999) primarily focuses on the role of masculinity within Argentinean football to explain the importance for men to be a part of the football scene. Giulianotti et al. (1994) studied football, violence and social identity. Giulianotti (1999) argues that rivalry can always be linked to historical fracture lines. These can be categorized in three

different fracture lines: a geographical fracture line, a socio-historical fracture line and an ideological fracture line. Rivalry is more intense if different fracture lines cross. Garriga (2007) studied the local identity phenomena in Argentina. He claims that the 'us' and the 'other', which were explained as the in-group and out-group in theory on identity, take up an important role in football fanship.

Local identities are –like social identities- a set of shared characteristics of people within a certain region, city, or even neighborhood, with the latter often appearing in Argentinean football. The presence of an clearly visible 'other' in every football encounter works as a mirror to define the 'us', which is a fundamental part in the nowadays fragmented football identity. The importance of local 'others' in comparison with distant 'others' is exactly an example which displays the importance of local identities in football instead of identities on a broader level like on a national base.

Argentina's mayor international rivals – Brazil and England – are seen as distant 'others'. Games between national teams do not take place often; games against Brazil only occur one or two times a year at most, while games against the English squad for only take place once every few years or even longer. Although the style of play of the different international teams differ from time to time and from place to place, most players of the Argentine national team play abroad and have accustomed to the English, Italian or Spanish style of play, so the Argentines can not call their style of play 'ours' or typical Argentinean. Only the colors of the national flag symbolize the nation, or the 'us' within this context, which is little in comparison with games on the local level. Within the Argentinean league, games are played frequently; which are all a display of 'us' and 'others'. This way, the imagined community of the nation is – on the local level - replaced with less imaginable and more visible communities, on a stage which is much more alive where even styles of play are recognizable or the rivals are geographically close, which is obvious the case in Rosario.

Not all approaches discussed previously have been taken into account in this case study. This thesis does not focus much on the social psychological component, but merely focuses on the system and societal component (Turner, 1975, Rubin, 2003). During the research, fans were mainly approached as (part of) a group, less focusing on the individual. Duke and Crolley (2001) and Ray (2004) are used in the next paragraph to clarify the deep bonds between football, social class, neighborhoods and politics as the basis for many rivalries in Argentine football nowadays. The fourth paragraph involves affective and cognitive aspects of identification, the fifth paragraph tries to find the basis of the rivalry between Newell's and Central, using Giulianotti's fracture line theory a and the sixth paragraph will involve the expressions of identity and the importance of local identity in football rivalry (Garriga, 2007).

3. Introduction to Football in Argentina

In order to get a basic understanding on the historical context surrounding the research topic, it is important to take a look at the emergence of football in Argentina. Many of today's rivalries emerged a long time ago, while social class, politics and violence have played an important role throughout history and still continue to do so nowadays.

Duke and Crolley (2001) describe the history of Argentine football through three stages; the [1] infant period of English dominance of Argentine football, the [2] adolescence and the Argentine take-over of football and the [3] maturity and consolidation of the links between *fútbol* and politics. This section will focus mainly on the first stage as within this historical period the foundation of Newell's Old Boys took place. The latter stages will be discussed briefly as they contain topics such as politics and hooliganism, which will be discussed later in this thesis.

The infant period of English dominance of Argentine football covers the establishment of the game by the English population of Buenos Aires. As Britain was Argentina's main trading partner, the game was introduced by visiting seamen and spread by expatriate railway workers throughout the country. The influence of these railway workers can still be seen today, as two of the oldest football clubs have their roots based in railway companies. A great example is Rosario Central, the main rival of Newell's Old Boys, which was founded in 1889 (Duke and Crolley, 2001, p94-98). According to Duke and Crolley (2001), Newell's Old Boys had its origin based in a British School started by industrialists, like many other teams were founded that way. The earliest teams consisted exclusively out of British players. The influence of the British can also be seen in the foundation of the official football association in 1893, as its first presidents all were British and the official language within this association was English during the first years of operation.

Both Archetti (1999) and Duke and Crolley (2001) mention that the British monopoly on the game didn't last long as during an immense population increase by Italian and Spanish immigrants, the game became adopted by a larger group of people. During this period, the early links between neighborhood and club were established. Boca Juniors for example was founded by immigrants in 1905; 'Boca' meaning mouth of the river, which points to their identification with their port on the River Plate and 'Juniors' reflects the fact that they now considered themselves to be children of that place rather than immigrants.

Archetti argues that the adaptation of the game by immigrants was crucial in the formation of new football values. The English learned their football in the schools, focusing on teamwork and

discipline, while the immigrants or creoles learned to play in the streets, focusing on individualism and dribbling. Also crowd values changed during this period. While in 1905 the –mainly elite- crowd in an Argentine stadium visiting a match against British side Nottingham Forest was quiet and respectful (usual in those days), the mixed crowd in 1909 (only four years later!) visiting matches against other British sides (Everton and Tottenham Hotspur) was cheering, singing and whistling. This caused the elite to withdraw themselves more from the game and the tensions between both the English and the creoles erupted in 1912 as the official football association split into two rival organizations, namely the traditionalist Asociación Argentina de Football, which had 52 member clubs and the breakaway Federación Argentina de Football, which had 152 members clubs. At the same time there were a further 280 clubs not subscribed to this associations, which eventually led to the entry of more clubs from poorer non-English backgrounds into football competition. When both organizations merged together again in 1915, many British teams already withdrew themselves from competition and switched towards the still all Britain game of Rugby. This is seen as the end of the infancy stage.

The second period, described as the adolescence and the Argentine take-over of football, starts here, as the Argentines, or creoles, took-over the game of football during the decades after the separation and remerging of the football association. The contrasting styles of the British game and the way the creoles play it, complicated the search for a national football identity, and resulted in a continued focus on local identities (Duke and Crolley, 2001, p98-105). To break with the English heritage of football, the name was translated into Spanish and became *fútbol*, while in this same phase the links between politics, the people and *fútbol* were established. The government started to use football as political propaganda. It was important to the state to establish a relationship between itself and football fans. Juan Peron used football to gain popularity, by building and modifying stadiums and awarding medals of honor. (Ray, 2004).

The third period, referred to as the phase of maturity and consolidation of the links between *fútbol* and politics took place in the 50s and 60s when football became professionalized and the relationship between football and politics became institutionalized (Duke and Crolley, p 106-114). For individual politicians, football clubs are used to display themselves to the public. Directing and supporting a football club makes politicians known to a large public. This way, football does not only attract businessmen for sponsorships deals, but they see clubs as their bridge to politics. Otherwise, the government and politicians also use club's to gain popularity or to spread propaganda. The 1978 World Cup hosted by Argentina during the military junta of Jorge Rafael Videla, was also a stage of political propaganda. The junta increased its already large national debt to host this event by \$700 million and used an PR firm to improve the country's image during the World Cup. The Slogan: *Los Argentinos*

somos derechos y humanos ('we Argentines are upright and humane') could be seen both inside and outside of the stadium. Another example is General Pinochet who - during the military regime in neighboring country Chile - named himself president of Colo-Colo, the nation's most popular club. (Galeano, 2004)

Also, within this period, the appearance of politically organized and often violent fan groups or *barras bravas* became visible. This theme however, is not very relevant to this thesis' subject, although it will be clarified shortly in the upcoming paragraph about the fan community in the section regarding *la hinchada*.

4. Analysis of Newell's Old Boys Fan Community

Duke and Crolley (2001) wrote about the local clash between Newell's and Central as being a clash of classes, the radical right wing *Newellistas* versus the left wing Peronists of Central. It might still have the same image for the *porteños*, the citizens of Buenos Aires, but in Rosario none of the football fans would agree with this stereotype. Personally I have encountered an incredible diversity in fans and socio political backgrounds, which do not even come close to the stereotype surrounding the match. Although Newell's Old Boys is –also according to the official data provided by the club- of aristocratic origin and Rosario Central has always claimed itself to be the people's club, nothing of this historical class struggle can be seen in the 21st Century. Many Newell's fans agree that the middle upper-class might have been historically related to the institution, but I have also discovered contradictory life histories of older fans, whose history –or at least their family history- date back until the first years of club in the early 20th Century who do not match with this theory. Both clubs emerged from the popular northern neighborhood of *Arroyito*, although Newell's moved towards to wealthier city centre early in its existence. It might have been more common for doctors, lawyers and businessmen to be fan of Newell's, but fans from marginalized parts of society have always chosen between the two, which was especially the case when both teams grew in popularity because of their early admittance to the national league in 1939. Nowadays, class differences do exist but they can not –at least in Rosario- be related with club fanship. Class differences that are visible have to do with economic power and the fan location in the stadium (higher classes on the sides, lower classes behind the goal), as well as the group of fans they belong to. This division into groups of fans is however not typically for Newell's nor Central, but it is a division which can be found throughout Argentine football in every fan community.

In general I would distinguish four different groups of fans, differing in their loyalty to the club, their socio-economical background, their identification with club, history and icons, and the type of club related activities they are involved in. These groups are the *hinchada*, the active *hinchas*, the passive *hinchas* and inactive *hinchas*. As I mainly focused on fanatic fans, the first two groups are the center point of attention in this thesis, although I will provide descriptions on the latter two groups.

As in the following part of this paragraph references are made to locations within the stadium, a stadium seat map is displayed below:

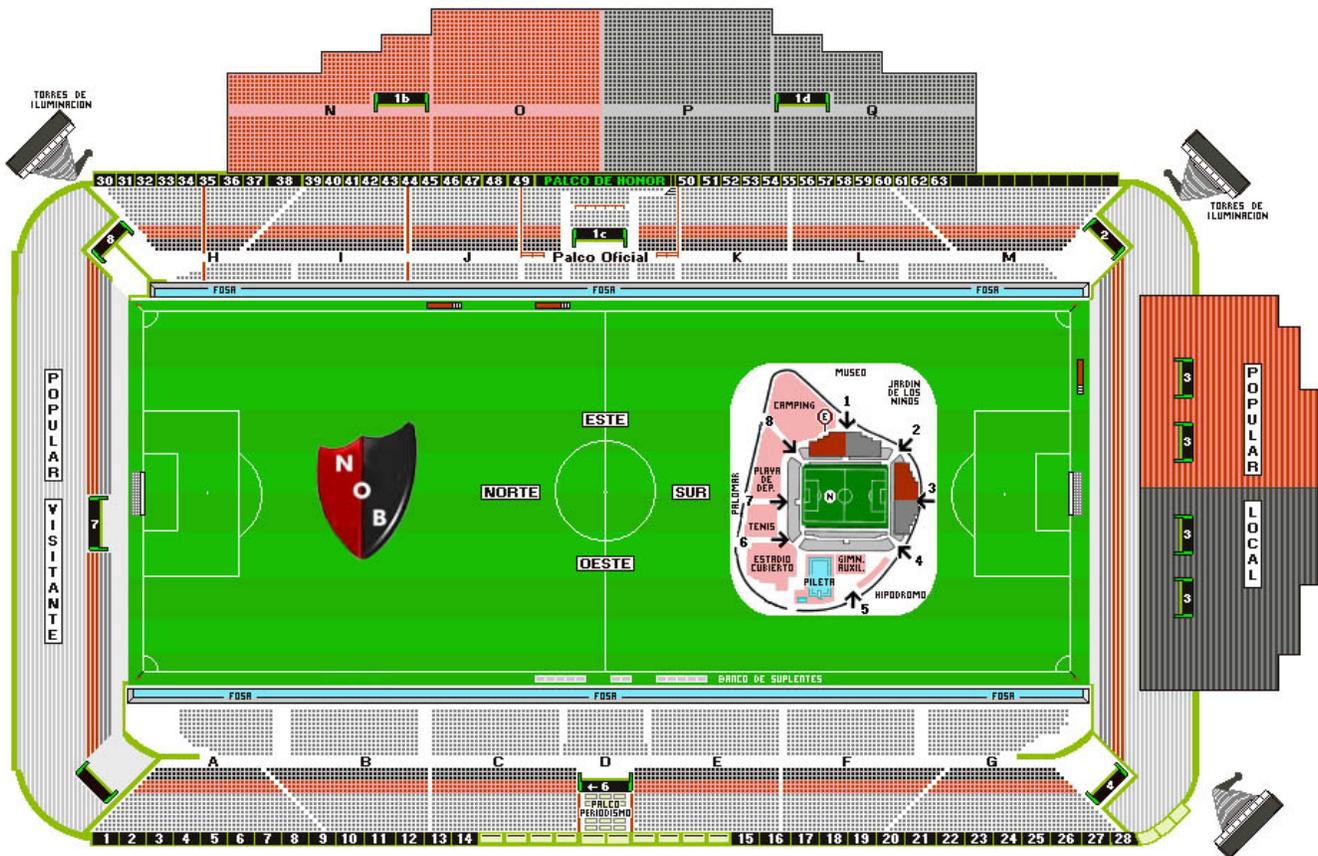


Fig 1. 'Coloso del Parque' Newell's Old Boys Stadium Map

To make things clear, I will explain the several locations shortly. The centre of the pitch displays the four wind locations: *Este* or East, *Sur* or South, *Oeste* or West and *Norte* or North. The *popular local*, the general stands (standing) are displayed on the south side (right side of the map). These tickets are the cheapest ones, usually free for members of the club and only \$25 pesos (5 Euros) for non-members. This southern stage consists out of two levels: the lower level (gray), where the *barra brava* is located in the center, just below the upper level of that stage (red and black). The western stage (displayed on the down side of the map) is the historical stage. It's relatively small, consists out of one level only and locates the press and seats, which cost \$90 pesos (18 Euros) for non-members. The east side of the stadium (upper side of the map) consists out of two levels and seating. The seats however can only be found on the lower level and are less comfortable than the seats on the other *platea*. The upper level is concrete only, just like the popular stand, only the view is better. The *popular visitante* on the north (left side of the map) is the standing stage for the visiting fans.

Before describing the four groups I distinguish, it is important to know the difference between a fan and a spectator. Sport fans are individuals who share a common interest in a certain sport and identify with a certain team or athlete. Sport spectators are individuals who are actively witnessing a sporting event, either live (personal presence) or through another channel (radio, television) (Wann et al, 2001). Some sport fans can be spectators as well, while not all spectators necessarily have to be sport fans or do not identify with the teams or athletes on the pitch.

The following four fan categories in the Newell's Old Boys' fan community can also be categorized into two groups. The first group identifies strongly with the club, the players, its history, etc. For them, fanship is the central component of the self-concept and an extension of their identity (Wann & Branscombe, 1990). The second group identifies less with the club and the performances do not have much effect on people's lives and identities. Wann & Branscombe (1990) refer to both groups as die-hards (the first group) and "fair weather" fans (the second group). The first two fan categories (*la hinchada* and the active *hinchas*) belong to the so-called die-hards, while the latter two mainly belong to the "fair weather" fans.

4.1 La Hinchada

The *hinchada* or *La Banda* is the fiercest group of fans of a club. Another word used to describe this group are the *barras bravas*, although this word has a negative image and is usually used in the media while describing the misbehaving of the *hinchada* or terminology used by the justice department to describe a certain group of hooligans. *Barras bravas* will not be a word which one will find through self identification.

The *hinchada* - usually located behind the goal in a stadium section called popular or general- is a relatively small, but strict hierarchical (even military) structured group run by a leader (*capo*), lower bosses and soldiers and have strong ties with the club's president, the players, and other *hinchadas* (Giulianotti, 1994). They use an intensive recruiting and trial program to find new members. Most members come from the marginalized parts of society and are between twenty and 25-years-old, although leaders are often in their 30s (*Pimpi*, capo of Newell's) or 40s (recently incarcerated Rafael DiZeo, former capo of Boca Juniors). Though women can be found on the terraces during a game, *barras bravas* are not known for having female members and consist of young males mostly. According to Julio Chiappetta (journalist for Clarín, one of the nations' main newspapers) the size of the *barras bravas* range up from 200 to 500, although the core –usually living together like in the case

of the Newell's barra in Funavi de Grandole y Gutierrez- is relatively small (up to fifty) while a larger part of the group just rolls along.

For the top members it is common that their 'club related activities' are their main form of income. A former *barra brava* of the *Chaperos* (an expelled *banda* of Rosario Central) admitted to me that top members of the group receive payment from the club and gain many other privileges through their contacts with the club. They control the parking lots surrounding the stadium, arrange the bus trips to away matches and rumors have been heard that they even own the transfer rights of several players, including Newell's youngster Vangioni. Although officially not represented by *El Pimpi*, it is widely known that he does own the rights and can possibly make lots of money if the player will be sold one day. In that particular case he will receive a large percentage of the transfer fee, which he will partly distribute within his organization, although the majority of the members are not in the *barra brava* for financial motives, but are in there for status and power.

Barras bravas have several links to politics, especially due to their relations with the club president. The club provides the *hinchada* with favors, the *hinchada* supports the president in return unconditionally. This 'unconditionally' often results in premeditated (political) violence. Club politicians use the *barra bravas* for several political purposes like hanging up posters and attacking political opponents. An example is the anti-president demonstration organized by my informant *Tiki Martinez* on the 2nd of June (the day of my return from the field), which was brutally disrupted by a massive attack of *barras bravas*. In return for their political support, they receive the [illegal] favors from the board and are therefore involved in illegal activities, such as the illegal selling of match tickets, provided by the club. They are also known to be involved in drug trafficking and blackmailing.

Inside the stadium the *hinchada* is the group that controls the atmosphere in the stadium. They start the chants, they decide which banners hang on the fences and stands, lighten up the stadium with fireworks, etc. They do not hesitate to attack political opponents of the same team in their own stadium, so they have an immense power inside the ground. Although several *hinchadas* can sometimes be found in the stadium, some cooperate and ban the rival groups from the stadium.

Newell's has three important *hinchadas* which will be mentioned below.

Newell's

- *Los Pimpi* (nickname of the leader, *hinchada* from *Funavi de Grandole y Gutierrez*)
- *La Banda de Churrasco* (group from *barrio Churrasco*, cooperating with *Los Pimpi*)

- *La Banda de Loca de Mente* (Rival *hinchada* from *Zona Oeste*, *barrio Belgrano*)

Rosario Central's *hinchada* is organized similarly but consists out of less groups nowadays:

Rosario Central

- *Los Pillines* (*Pillin* is the nickname of the leader, group from *Funavi Dedonado y Mendoza* in the northern part of the city in the neighborhood of *Arroyito*)
- *Los Paquitos* (*Paco Mono* is the nickname of the leader, small group from the southern zone)

The *hinchada* of Rosario Central also often calls them *Los Guerreros*, probably a heritage from the past when the *hinchada* was more divided and internal struggle was common:

- *Los Guerreros del Infierno* (spread out throughout many parts of the city)
- *Corazones Calientes* (*barrio 7. septiembre*)
- *RC2000* (*barrio Arroyito*)
- *Los Chaperos* (*Zona Oeste*)

According to Julio Chiappetta, both the *Pimpis* and the *Pillines* are two of the most dangerous firms in Argentina, together with historical giants Boca Juniors (*La Doce*) and River Plate (*Los Borrachos del Tablón*) These *hinchada* or the *barras bravas* are often linked with non-political, but football related violence and it is again the *capo* who calls the shots. He decides who enters or leaves the gang, when to fight, which trophies of other teams to rob (banners, shirts). The *capo* is the *hinchada's* spokesman for both the club as the law enforcement. It is interesting to see that the *hinchada* often acts as the twelfth player on the pitch, resulting in violence inside the stadium, directly initiated from the match, usually involving attacks on players and officials or pitch invasions. Although I haven't experienced this with the Newell's fans, I have seen it in the case of Racing Club. While this side was losing two to zero, and three players received the red card, fans invaded to pitch to demand the referee to stop the game, who eventually did. Violence in this case is a way to defend the club's pride, and the situation surrounding the *barras bravas* or *hinchada* is therefore complicated. Fans from the other groups listed below, often speak with pride about the *hinchada's* achievements, their 'war-trophies', their fierceness and their readiness to turn the stadium into an arena feared by the opponent team. The same fans however, speak

badly about the violence, their own fears to go to the stadium, the crime the *hinchada* is involved in and their support for a club president who is widely considered to be a corrupt dictator.

Therefore it seems that also fans mix the terms *barra brava* and *hinchada*, associating the first with negative activities and the second one with positive activities, although [if asked] they admit both terms represent the same group.

4.2 Active *Hincha*

Also referred to as *hincha militante* or *fanático*, the active *hincha* is member of a heterogeneous group of fans who dedicate an important part of their live to the club they support. As this group is heterogenic and therefore hard to describe, I will shortly introduce some fanatic fans to demonstrate the immense diversity and variety within this group.

The active *hincha* is usually a man who goes wherever the teams goes, which means they go to both home and away matches (although some might not due to personal reasons), are often *socio* of the club and operate both in groups and individually. Operating in groups does not automatically mean that it is an official registered or recognized unit, sometimes the fans do not even consider themselves part of a group or organization, although they act like it. Some are known within the club, others are not. A list of militant *hinchas*, or militant groups does not exist and none of the fans can guess nor know how many people are within this group. Personally I would estimate hundreds of them, although this would still mean a relatively small part of the 40.000 fans in the stadium. Data to validate this guess is however not in my possession.

The active *hincha* is a collector of football related gimmicks regarding the club. Groups of active *hinchas* are often, but not always, known within the club and might operate with their approval, although this might not be the case if the group is handling political issues against the current club politics. Groups of *hinchas militantes* organize themselves for several reasons: mainly politically, socially or culturally. A combination is of course also possible. I had the privilege to meet several fanatic fans during my research. They will be shortly introduced below.

Claudio ‘Tiki’ Martinez

Claudio is an energetic person in his early forties. During the first meeting I was overwhelmed by his enthusiasm for Newell’s and his anti Lopez opinions throughout the discussion. After an hour and a half he invited me to his house, where he had many photos and information for me to take home with me. Walking along the street with *Tiki* [Claudio’s nickname] I realized that this was a famous person

within the fan community. He is hated by the *barra brava* for his opposition against the club president. The more we came closer to his house, the more graffiti I encountered on the walls of the houses on the way to his apartment. ‘*Tiki Ladron!*’ [Tiki, thief!], was a very present expression in the graffiti paintings. He explained to me that this was the work of the *barras bravas*, which also threatened to kill him, trashed his brothers’ car and smashed the windows of his business. The businessman (owner of several pizza restaurants) lives in a relatively large apartment near the Newell’s Stadium. He told me that his neighbors do not like him, as they fear the hooligans might trash the place some day. Also his girlfriend feels unsafe, but nothing can stop him from continuing his passion and pursuing his main objective: free club elections! ‘It has been fourteen years since the last elections, they have been cancelled already two times’. In his enthusiasm, he cancelled his workday and has spend the rest of the day with me explaining the work of his organization Nuevo Espacio Rojinegro (Opposition group of current presidency), his fan website (www.soyleproso.com), his cultural work (he made a parody DVD on the first *clasico*, starring many former players of the 70’s and 80’s) and parties honoring famous players. The latter, can be a really weird event for outsiders. He told me he once threw a party for an old Boca player who scored a goal against Newell’s rival Central, which eventually led to its relegation. To thank him for that, he threw the party and with a smile from ear to ear *Tiki* admitted that he had never seen a person (the Boca player) looking so confused in his life before. Without any regrets, *Tiki* told me his businesses are running bad, but his work to get Newell’s back to the club it once is consuming all his time. According to him and others, this is what the true essence of a fan is. Not driven by economical or power motives (like the *barras bravas*), but pure emotionally. Due to security reasons, he goes to the matches in disguise and can usually be found -or not found as he is incognito- at the *platea* stands.

José Alejandro Dalonso

José Dalonso is a university professor in his mid 40’s. He teaches Research Methods, but a few years ago he saw his job as his spare time. He sensed his real job was writing a book in honor of the club he has been a fan of since birth. Eventually this resulted in his book: *De Newell’s*, of which he gave me a digitalized version. Without many sponsors, putting in his own money, he traveled through several parts of Argentina, to find and interview former players, club heroes, relatives of Isaac Newell’s. He didn’t made much money on the book, but he told me it was never his intention. He just felt he had to write it, and several years he worked up to eighteen hours a day completing his book, while still teaching at the Universidad de Rosario.

Galgo and Friends

Galgo -he never mentioned his real name- is a 19-year-old rebellious guy, partly responsible for half the city covered in red and black. He and his friends, in age ranging from 18 until 25, have been painting walls and abandoned houses throughout the city for several years now. Galgo admitted to me that they usually operate with groups up to four persons, between three and five in the morning, during the week. He never called his group 'a group' as he claims:

“We are all just friends sharing the same objective: covering the city in the club colors and representing our team”.

Although there are also other groups of fans painting around the city, they all know each other and usually paint within their own zone. Galgo and his friends are now opposing President Lopez, but are not active in demonstrations. This way they manage to remain good contact with the *barra brava* (for whom they worked in the past, painting banners and murals in the stadium) and can they still be found on the popular stand behind the goal, together with the *hinchada*.

Fernando Sauro

Fernando Sauro is widely known to be a *loco*, a madman. This forty-year-old entrepreneur is extremely energetic and proud of Newell's. Although he is not active within a group or what so ever, he is a well known figure within the fan movement. There are three main reasons for that. First of all it's hard to find a person who talks that much about Newell's, Maradona and Argentina. He organized a barbeque for me, where he invited many guests and ordered them to bring photos, magazines, t-shirts, etc. to his house in Funes, a small village outside of Rosario, where his garden showed a giant pool with club logo on the bottom. Second reason is that he travels all over the world, chasing the national team to all world cups, since 1986. He proudly showed me many albums of his experiences, while he was 'representing' both Argentina as Newell's in all those countries. Thirdly, due to the Japanese friend he travels with, he is one of the main figures of Newell's first peña or filial in the Asia (in Japan), to whom he introduced me. Fernando can be found on the upper *platea* stand (western stage).

Rubén Fraga

Rubén Fraga is a journalist for small newspaper El Ciudadano, in Rosario. Currently in his mid 50's he is a member of the anti Lopez movement, although he can not actively participate during his actual

working situation. Ironically, a few years ago Newell's President Lopez took over the newspaper he works for. This eventually resulted similar to the way he runs Newell's, according to Rubén:

“It's a mess. Lopez is Mafiosi, he can do whatever he wants, and nobody can do anything about it. He hasn't paid me in the last six weeks and it seems I have to hold on for a few more months.”

Although he is a journalist in economics and politics, he is considered to be an expert on Newell's culture and history. He has repeatedly participated in radio debates, where journalists and experts of both Newell's and Central debated on several themes. He admitted he can be found on the upper *platea* stand (western stage).

In the above described short stories one can read that this group is really diverse. Usually younger active *hinchas* can be found on the popular stands (standing, cheapest location in the stadium), while other (older and financially more powerful) *hinchas* can also be found on the *platea* stands (seating). Sometimes, political opponents hunted by the *barra brava* also take place on the relatively quieter and safer seatings. They all have an extremely identification with club loyalty, club history and its icons and are willing to invest lots of money and time in their fanship.

4.3 Passive *Hincha*

This group refers to the 'average' fan, the spectator, who sporadically goes to the home matches, depending on the team they play, although some of this group might go to every match, both home and away. He or she, usually 'lives' the club in the weekends in the stadium or in a bar in the neighborhood. Afterwards, the passive *hincha* goes back to his or her home, where its connection with the club ends. I would like to refer to this as indirect loyalty, while the active *hincha* directly loyal to its team due to its dedication.

Passive *hinchas* come from all parts of society and depending on their salary, age and family situation they decide whether to go to the popular stands or the *platea* stands or not visiting the matches at all. Although they go to both the popular and the *platea*, relatively a larger part of the *platea* consists out of this third group of fans.

4.4 Inactive *Hincha*

This fourth group consists out of all kinds of people, who count themselves in for a certain team, but are completely inactive as a fan. They never go to the stadium, don't know who's playing for their team, have no clue about club's history and do not even watch the matches, but are sometimes still showing minimal connections with the club by simple expressions on school books and t-shirts.

As we discussed the four different groups of fans, the description clearly point out that they differ in their loyalty and their identification with club. While the first two groups are involved in many club related activities, the latter two are rather passive or inactive, but they still indentify (weakly) with the club. Although research mainly focused on the first two groups (and parts of the third group, mainly in the stadium), especially regarding the sixth paragraphs about identification through rituals and symbolism, all groups have their strong dislike for the 'others' (Rosario Central and its fan community) in common. The next paragraph discusses where this dislike (or the rivalry so to say) historically derives from and how this is still visible nowadays.

5. Newell's & *El Clásico* in a historical and societal perspective

All four fan groups discussed in the previous paragraph are shaped by the rivalry with Rosario. In this context of football rivalry, the identification of supporters with their club can be seen through a socio-historical perspective. Giulianotti (1999) argues that every derby involves two teams with different geographical and cultural identities. Because of the difference in identities of the clubs, a sentiment of 'us' against 'them' is created (the inner- and outer group), which increases the bond and affection with the inner group. Giulianotti claims that football clubs construct their identity through rivalry with other clubs. Historically, most rivalry took place within the limits of the city or between the two major teams of neighboring towns. These matches always gathered many crowds, because of the short distances the fans had to travel to arrive at the stadium. Culturally, both groups of fans were often similar as their lives crossed each other and they often shared laughs and discussions about confrontations in the past and in the future. Up until today, the derbies or *clásicos* (as they are called in Latin America) remain to be the main regional event people look forward to every year.

To understand the real meaning of these *clásicos*, one has to dig in the rivalry's past. Giulianotti argues that every rivalry is caused by so-called fracture lines which lie at the roots of every single derby. He classifies three (historical) fracture lines that are important for the identification of the fan with his club: a geographical fracture line, a socio-economical fracture line and an ideological fracture line. If these fracture lines cross each other, this intensifies the rivalry. Derbies evolve throughout history and are sometimes even disconnected from their original reason of existence.

This paragraph aims to discuss these three historical fracture lines and links them with the *clásico Rosarino*, in order to get a better understanding of the rivalry we are facing today. The first section will provide an historical overview of both Newell's Old Boys and the *clásico Rosarino*. Later on in this paragraph, each fracture line will be discussed and pointed out by referring to this history.

5.1 History of Newell's and historical context of the rivalry

The history of Newell's Old Boys officially starts with the arrival of the sixteen-year-old Isaac Newell in 1869 in the harbor of Rosario. Although it's hard to proof, many fans who wrote on Newell's claim he brought the first football (or *pelota*) to Argentina. When the official rules of the game were set in 1882 during a convention in England, football started in the same year in March at the *Colegio Anglo Argentino* between *calle Entre Rios* and *Wheelwright*.

Newell's Old Boys was officially founded in 1903 in honor of the English immigrant and founder/director of the British High School (*Colegio Anglo Argentino*) in Rosario. Ex alumni named the club in honor of the man who was also their football coach. The first years the team played on a pitch located in between *Humberto 1st* and *Boulevard Avellaneda* in the northern part of town in the neighborhood *Arroyito*, where also their main Rosario Central is located. On the 4th of September 1905 the club became institutionalized and Dr. Victor Heitz was installed as the first president of the club, besides being a member of the team. Earlier that year, the first *clásico* was played on the 18th of June between Newell's Old Boys and Rosario Central (1-0) of which the latter team was back then nicknamed *Talleres*.

In 1907 the club moved from *Arroyito* to the centre of the city, moving to a pitch located in between *Calle San Luis* and *Calle Rioja* in *Barrio Vila*. The club uses this location several years as they moved again on the 22nd of July 1911 to their present location in the *Parque de Independencia*, also located near the city centre. As the city centre was the richest part in town and because of their British and well-educated founders the club had an aristocratic image in the early days.

The first official stand was opened officially on the 26th of May 1929 with a mini tournament between Newell's, Boca Juniors and Nacional de Montevideo, who described themselves as the three musketeers of the football in the Rio de la Plata area referring to the locations of both Argentina and Uruguay.

As mentioned in the introduction, the first *clásico* was played already in 1905. Rivalry, however, wasn't really intense because of the presence of many teams in Rosario who were all playing in a local league in those days. Rivalry intensified when the League of Rosario was professionalized in 1931, but it was not until 1939 that rivalry increased to proportions comparable to the rivalry still existing today. Main cause of this increase was the admittance of both teams to the AFA (Argentine Football Association). Both teams moved from their local league to the national league as the only two teams from the interior of the country, leaving the League of Rosario behind. The local league in Rosario lost importance because of this move as people from Rosario preferred to see the games against the bigger teams from Buenos Aires. Although Central Cordoba, Tiro Federal and Club Atlético Argentino - other important teams from Rosario - also moved to the AFA several years later, they already lost their importance in a way that they would never be able to keep up with Newell's and Rosario Central again and until now still play in lower leagues and they never became an important part of the passion the people of Rosario have for football. Although rivalry increased heavily in 1939, a real rivalry is kept alive by events throughout the years and that's exactly what contributed to the position both teams have in nowadays Rosario.

Besides the early decline of the other teams in Rosario, Newell's and Central remained big in the small and footballistically polarized city because they kept facing each other on important occasions throughout the last century up until now. Before the admittance to the AFA in 1939 Newell's had been more successful in the local league and also the first years in the national league Newell's ranked higher than their main rival. Rosario Central was however the first team to become the national champion, defeating Newell's Old Boys in the semifinals of the 1971 National Championship. Newell's on its turn won their first national title defeating Rosario Central at the *Gigante de Arroyito* (Central's home stadium) in the final phase of the 1974 Metropolitano Championship. Other mayor clashes were battled out in the second round of the *Copa Libertadores* in 1975 and the semifinal of the 1980 National Championship, while Newell's ranked second at one point behind from Central in de 1986/1987 AFA First Division Championship. At that time, the score in official national and international titles was in favor of Central: 4 titles against 1.

Later on, the score changed leading to the present day score in which Newell's won six¹ and Rosario Central won five championships (including an additional international title, the 1995 CONMEBOL). Also, after 103 years of *clásicos*, the records are still tight, while also the amount of *hinchas* is similar.

Unlike in the rest of the country, the importance of Argentine giants Boca Juniors and River Plate is minimal. Besides, Rosario is the only city in the interior of the country where teams have actually won titles, which together with the pride Rosarians have for their city is one of the reasons why people still stick with their local teams. Also on the pitch rivalry has been fierce until present day. Since the early eighties, there haven't been any players who played for both sides as this is something considered "not done". As –unlike the bigger teams who buy players from smaller teams – both teams still value their youth resulting in many players on the pitch who are actually defending their club colors as being a *hinchas* (or a fanatic fan) of the club themselves like: Cristian Kily González, Gustavo Barros Schellotto, Luciano Figueroa, Eduardo Coudet, playing for Central and Germán Real, Lucas Bernardi, Germán Re, playing for Newell's.

¹ Fans of Rosario Central doubt the sixth star on the jersey of Newell's representing a championship. Newell's did win the 1990 *apertura*, but did not win the 1991 *clausura*. They did, however win the 1990/1991 Season by winning the final against *clausura* winner Boca Juniors. Central fans think Newell's deserve one star for the season only, Newell's claim two, one for the *apertura* and one for the overall championship.

5.2 Geographical fracture line

The geographical fracture line means that a club originally represented a certain region within a certain area. This means that the club represents the community where the club is located: a neighborhood, a city or a district. (Giulianotti, 1999). Two-club-rivalries are common in most cities. Often, one club is strongly connected with the heart of city, where also its fan community is located, while the other team's fans come from surrounding neighborhoods and the countryside. In the city of Rome, AS Roma is the team connected with the city centre, while on the countryside Lazio Roma has more followers. In Manchester the same story: Manchester City is popular in the centre, Manchester United in the suburbs and the rest of the country. Portelli (1993) sees a tendency in these two-club-rivalries. The club in the city centre is often less successful and financially weaker, but this is compensated by the fact that the club is so deeply rooted in the heart of the city that its fan community is smaller, but yet more loyal and fiercer.

As we can see in the previous section, both clubs were originated from the same neighborhood, although quickly after the foundation Newell's moved towards the city centre. As both clubs were part of a larger league with various local teams, rivalry was far from intense and it was not until the admittance to the AFA (Argentine Football Association) that the derby became important. The other clubs lost their importance and the city of Rosario became polarized. Both fan communities were growing and neighborhood ties became even stronger. Rosario Central became deeply rooted in the northern region of the city, on the shores of the Paraná river, while Newell's Old Boys was rooted in the city centre, in the locally famous *Parque de Independencia*.

Nowadays, due to inner city migration and the increase of popularity of each team during its success periods, it is more difficult to define where the fans come from. Fans of both teams can be found throughout the entire city, although the original geographical boundaries are visible. It is still more likely to find *Centralistas* in the northern and western zones of the city, while *Newellistas* are more likely to be found in the wealthier city centre and the marginalized southern zone (see the contradiction). The *hinchada* can be found in fixed locations, often they are living together in *funavis* (sort of gated community of several apartment buildings, usually designed for lower income people) or at least in the same neighborhood. The incorporation of *Zona Sur* within the fan community of Newell's Old Boys has an interesting history. It is relatively the youngest part of the city, and consists for a large part out of migrants from the marginalized northern parts of Argentina. Historically these persons are usually fan of Boca Juniors or River Plate, but they arrived during the success period of Newell's, which is one of the three reasons that contributed to their converting into Newell's fans.

Secondly, River Plate and Boca Juniors have had a fierce rivalry with Rosario Central, which made it easier for the newcomers to pick Newell's as their favorite team and not much later (third reason), when president Lopez got in charge, people could enter the stadium for free, especially attracting the people from the south of the city. One can see that the *clásico Rosarino* definitely contains an historical geographical line, which is still visible nowadays.

5.3 Socio-economical fracture line

Not only is the geographical fracture line responsible for fan identification with a certain team. Also the socio-economical fracture line results in the bond fans have with their team. Often, a football club is associated with a certain social class within a (regional) society (Giulianotti, 1999). Many stereotypes come from this socio-economical fracture line. In the Netherlands for example, Ajax is considered to be the club of the country's elite, while Feyenoord represents the working class. Although this image still lives on today, both fan community are actually very diverse. Despite the fact that the socio-economical differences are not very visible nowadays, the stereotype and the fracture line is still present in probably the fiercest rivalry in the country.

To reveal the socio-economical fracture line in Rosario's fiercest rivalry, one has to dig far into the clubs' histories. Newell's was originally founded by university students and former students at the British High School, which was founded by Isaac Newell. Already in the first years of existence, the club moved to the city's centre, soon to be located at the spot they still possess nowadays in the *Parque de Independencia*. As the city centre was the richest part in town and because of their British and well-educated founders the club had an aristocratic image in the early days. Rosario Central on the other hand, was founded several years earlier by British rail workers, who in those days founded many clubs in Argentina. Despite the fact that the founders were British, the club had an image appealing to the working class and the rural areas surrounding Rosario.

Nowadays, however, many Newell's fans agree that the middle upper-class might have been historically related to the institution, but never refer to it anymore. Not only is this division not visible anymore (and therefore could have been consciously neglected by the Newell's fans), also the Rosario Central fans claim this does not play a role anymore in the present. They claim to be the most popular club (as will be further explained in the next paragraph), but this is based on the cultural tradition of the team and is not primarily based on socio-economical differences.

5.4 Ideological fracture line

Besides the geographical and the socio-economical fracture lines, a third factor can be distinguished within this context. At the roots of some very fierce rivalries one can find ideological motivators. The connection and identification of a fan with his club is sometimes linked with the set of values a club is connected with. It is imaginable that a club is associated with a certain ideology, ranging from political to religious values and ideologies. Opposition of ideologies often leads to polarization, which strengthens the bond with the inner group (the 'us') and weakens the bond with the out group (the 'them'). Some of the world's best known rivalries are fed by opposing ideologies: one can image the 'Old Firm', the derby between Glasgow's major teams Celtic and the Rangers. The first one is directly associated with its orientation on the Irish (Celts) and Catholicism, while the latter is associated with the British orientated Protestant community. Also Argentina's most famous rivalry has ideological roots. While in politics the two largest rival ideologies: the left wing Peronists and the middle class radicals have been facing each other of decades now, Boca Juniors has always been associated with Peronism, while River Plate has always been associated with the middle class radicals.

One would suggest that Newell's Old Boys and Rosario Central would share the same ideological division, because of the historical stereotypes about the class differences between the fans of both teams. Both teams however, have kept themselves outside of the politics, and during four months in Rosario I haven't met anybody who suggested otherwise. Both fan communities exist out of right wing radicals who share their passion on the stadium's terraces with left wing Peronists. The ideological fracture line has therefore not played a role in constructing the rivalry between Newell's and Central.

We can conclude that the rivalry between both sides have been constructed by the crossing of geographical fracture lines (two major clubs in one city and fans divided by neighborhood) and socio-economical fracture lines, although the latter does not play a role anymore and has moved to the background. Now we know how the rivalry between the two sides has been constructed, the next paragraph will discuss expressions of the rivalry in the present.

6. Identification through Rituals & Symbolism

As seen in the previous paragraph, stereotypes relating social background and political preferences do not exist nowadays. Ask a *Newellista* where he identifies with and he will respond that Newell's fans have more '*aguante*' and '*aliento*' and that they are more loyal than the fans of Central, giving several examples (the club historical achievements as mentioned earlier). Asking the same question to a *Centralista* will result into a similar response, but he will mention his own examples. Therefore, identification is mostly of a sportive and historical nature, belonging to the team which has the most loyal fans and the greatest history is what the people are proud of. Remarkably, except for the *hinchada*, the fans reject the violence surrounding Argentine football, but speak proudly of the football related achievements of the *barras bravas* as proof of the loyalty and fierceness of the Newell's fans.

The first part of this paragraph aims to discuss the heroes, achievements and local identity issues the fans do identify with. The second part of this paragraph seeks to explain the ways and methods of expressing their identification with the former mentioned topics.

6.1 Club history

In many conversations with fanatic fans, they pointed a lot at the club's history. Dozens of books, videos and audio recordings were offered to me. The club history and the cultural heritage of the club is honored by almost every fan, although some fans are actively involved in (re) creating this history and heritage. Within this section, I will discuss to examples of historical controversies, which have been investigated by groups of fanatic fans. With fanatic fans one can refer to the active *hinchas*, as mentioned in the fourth paragraph

6.1.1 Historical controversy on the origin of both clubs.

Both Rosario Central (founded in 1889) and Newell's Old Boys (founded in 1903) are considered to be ranked among the Argentines' oldest clubs, still playing professional football. Looking at official documents would consider Rosario Central to be the oldest team in Rosario, purely taking the foundation year in account. Newell's historians [fanatic, intellectual *Newellistas*, who investigate and publicize about Newell's history] however openly doubt about this and continue to claim their side to be older, taking other historical facts into account.

According to them it was Isaac Newell, founder of the British High School, who brought the first football to Argentina. Although it is hard to prove, this would state that Newell's (or at least the college its founders came from) is the first institution that practiced football. That would mean that they were not only the first in Rosario, but also in the entire country Argentina. It would take over twenty years (from 1882 until 1903) to lift the informal football practice from the patio of the school between *calle Entre Ríos* and *Wheelwright* towards the official foundation of Club Atlético Newell's Old Boys.

According to those historians, professors of the British High School also gave classes at the Colegio de los Talleres, where it brought football to the workers and their kids of the Central Argentine Railway Company, the business Rosario Central eventually derived from. Until that moment, football was not practiced and cricket (another British game) was the standard. The overall opinion therefore is that Rosario Central followed Newell's into the game of football and not otherwise.

The above mentioned story is not the only argument of the Newell's fans. Another argument, this one based on facts, is that –although Rosario Central was founded in 1889-, their present day name was given in 1903 when the British-owned Central Argentine Railway Company took over the Buenos Aires and Rosario Railway company. This is coincidentally the same year in which Newell's was founded. It took also until then to decide on the blue and yellowish striped kit design, which is still used nowadays. Newell's on the other hand started off in right away playing in the red and black design still used today. Groups of Newell's fans therefore refuse to recognize the official foundation date of Rosario Central.

6.1.2. Historical controversy on stereotypes and political backgrounds

Historically within the political spectrum, leftist movements are considered to be 'of the people' or 'the working class', while the rightist movements are considered to have a 'white collar', 'upper middle class' ideology. Although within this spectrum, the stereotype existed about Newell's having a more radical right wing middleclass group of *hinchas* against the left wing peronist *hinchas* of Central, which contributed to the rivalry, the people of Rosario do object to this. It might have been the case in the beginning of the twentieth century, but onwards I have found many contradictions which state out this stereotype has vanish away over the years. Nobody less than Juan Domingo Peron himself has visited the Newell's stadium together with Eva Peron on several occasions firming government acts, while the Rosario Central stadium was renovated and sponsored by the military junta in the late seventies of the previous century.

To make it even more confusing: while many independent historians, journalist, but also outsiders (in Buenos Aires for example) still hold on to the stereotype, Newell's fans heavily resist against this stereotype and fight to claim their club to be the club of the people and therefore being the number one side in Rosario. Although little doubt it was more common for upper middle class citizens to be fan of Newell's rather than to be fan of Rosario Central, they refuse to admit that the club's origins contribute to that. It might be the location from 1907 onwards in the richer city centre, but the club originally emerged from a group of University students (ex-alumni of Isaac Newell, emphasizing on the ex in front of the alumni). While Rosario Central was founded exclusively for members of the Railway Company it emerged from, the students of Newell's were of mixed origin: British, Italian and Spanish immigrants mixed with creoles or Argentines born in their new homeland, breaking with the stereotype that especially Newell's is of British origin. More on this will be mentioned in the third paragraph in the empirical section.

There is also a discussion going on about the origins of the club colors. In the beginning of the century, raising a red and black flag was a sign of anarchism and socialism. Giving those colors to a club would have been boldness. The graduates who founded the club in honor of Isaac Newell were already university students and the colors red and black were representing the ideology at that time. Some die-hards consider the official origins of the flag (black from the German flag, in honor of Isaac Newell's wife and red from the cross in England's flag) a façade. Red and black are the colors of revolution. Maradona, Argentine's modern (sport) hero of the nation, played for Newell's during the mid 90's of the 20th century, that he liked the club's outfit as there were made of the colors of the flag of Che Guevara. Maradona's number 10 Newell's shirt is by the way part of the collection in the museum of the Cuban Revolution, as Maradona is a personal friend of Fidel Castro and the colors of the shirt represent the colors of the insurgent group (*Movimiento 26. de Julio*) that had lifted him to power. Speaking of Che Guevara, as will be discussed in the second paragraph, Newell's fans deny Central's claim about their hero being a fan of the Blue and Yellow team. In fact, Che Guevara wasn't even a fanatic football fan; he was a fanatic rugby player until he had to withdraw himself from the game as the asthma he suffered from was worsening severely. Newell's fans therefore consider Central's claim to be a myth, aiming to break one of their arguments why they are Rosario's club of the people.

One has to take into consideration that both opinions are rather subjective than objective, and it's hard to find the truth, due to the absence of historical data confirming the many arguments in the still very vivid debate. As mentioned earlier, it is usually the active *hinchas* who take part in these discussions.

By (re)creating and discussing the club's history and its cultural heritage, they aim to damage the opponents cultural tradition. By publishing books on these subjects (for example De Newell's by José Dalonso, introduced in the 4th paragraph and through internet via various websites and forums) they consider it as an intellectual match, aiming to defeat the other by proving each others claims wrong.

Almost every active *hincha* I've met in Rosario is aware of these debates, while the passive *hinchas* who haven't read the media provided by these active *hinchas* do not know and do not bother.

6.2 Club heroes & achievements

Newellistas speak proudly of their history with players and coaches like Diego Armando Maradona (Argentina's greatest player ever) and Martin Bielsa (world cup winner in '78 and successful coach of Newell's Old Boys during the golden period in the early 90's) and memorize many historical wins and achievements through cultural expressions as will be explained further on within this paragraph. Through numerous interviews I recognize the following people as being an icon or hero of the club.

First of all, Isaac Newell is the founding father of Newell's Old Boys and fans consider him to be the true football pioneer who brought the first football to Argentina (see third paragraph). The club is named in honor of this British immigrant. Secondly, mostly players are honored because of their personal performances in the club's past, by scoring important goals in legendary *clásicos*. The greatest player of all, however, hasn't actually played a lot for Newell's, but his presence was the recognition that Newell's is a big name in Argentine football. Diego "El Pibe d'Oro" [golden boy] Armando Maradona played seven games for Newell's in the 1993 season, his first game in Argentina since his stay in Europe where he played for Napoli, Barcelona and Sevilla. A large mural of Diego Maradona is painted on the outside walls of the *Coloso del Parque*. Faustino González is –next to Isaac Newell's– the oldest hero in club history. He scored the winning goal in the first *clásico* in 1905. Mario Zanabria and Santiago Santamaria are seen as real *Newellistas* and they both played many seasons for the club, totaling up to 31 *clásicos*. Mario Zanabria also scored the winning goal (2-2) in the first championship trophy won by Newell's in an away game against rival Rosario Central. Marcelo 'El Loco' [Madman] Bielsa is the most famous coach in the history of the club. He is personally responsible for half of the trophies won by Newell's as he led his team to win the 1990, the 1990/1991 and the 1992 championships. A well known image of Bielsa throwing his fist in the air became a recognizable icon displayed on many murals and posters in town. Most honored players from the 'golden' period with Bielsa are Juan Manuel Llop and Gerardo Daniel 'Tata' Martino who both were important midfielders during these three victories. Ariel Osvaldo Cozzoni only won the 1990/1991 tournament, but the fact

that he was a local boy and became the national top scorer is still enough to be recognized as one of Newell's all time favorites.

Besides identifying former players and coaches as club heroes, fans also identify strongly with the club's *hinchada* which is also contradictory as they do not identify with the violence. Fans look up to the *hinchada* as they look up to other club heroes, which are honored through the further on discussed flags, banners and murals. With this tools of expression also the main club achievements are honored and remembered. These are the most important historical events still remembered. One of the first achievements of the club was winning the first clásico on the 18th of June in 1905 (1-0). Recently a parody on this match has been made by a fan group and has been distributed within the community. Another historical win against Rosario Central is the 2-2 draw on the 2nd of June in 1974, when Newell's became national champion in an away match against their eternal rival. The third memorable clásico was played the 8th of March 1992. Because the first team had to play an international match a few days later, the reserves went on to play the first team of Rosario Central in the league. Surprisingly, Newell's won and this victory is still celebrated and remembered by homage's in books and by banners inside the stadium. This day is still remembered as *Día del Padre* (Father's Day), as Newell's sees itself as the father and Central as the son, referring to more power, knowledge and history. Later that year, Newell went on to become the national champion, in which they also succeeded in 1987/1988, 1990, and 1990/1991. The latter is still remembered the same way as the victory against Rosario Central in 1992 remains in the memory of the fans. On the 9th of July in 1991, the 4th title was won in an away match against most successful Argentine club ever: Boca Juniors. The number '22' can often be found related to Newell's. This number refers to the *22 años insuperables* (the 22 unbeaten years) of Newell's Old Boys in clásicos played in their own stadium, *El Coloso del Parque*, between 1980 and 2002. The most recent achievement is another match played on the 12th of December 2004. The fact that Newell's won their sixth title during an away match is not merely the reason for memorizing this event. The amount of visiting fans that day was never seen before in the history of Argentine football. Independiente, the opponent, lend an unusual large part of their stadium to Newell's so that they could bring all the fans they wanted to the stadium. Up to 40.000 *Newellistas* entered the stadium in Buenos Aires, exactly the same amount of fans that fit in their home stadium. This deed is considered to be prove of the loyalty and dedication of the *Newellistas* for their favorite team.

6.3 Regionalism

All fans have one thing in common. They are proud of being Argentine. When *la selección* plays its games, the entire nation turns into a *celeste y blanco* minded crowd. However, more than in Europa, inside the stadiums and on the streets around the stadiums, people continue to represent their own club team together with supporting the national team. The national has merged with the local in a way that Argentina fans take Newell's banners along with them inside the stadium, while wearing the national shirt. Before and after the games, the rivals still make fun of each other, although (as I have heard, not experienced) in a friendlier way.

What fans of both teams have in common is their pride of being from Rosario, which explains why it is –unlike in the rest of the interior of the country– hard to find fans of other major Buenos Aires based teams like Boca Juniors, River Plate and Independiente. Being from Rosario is being different than the 'arrogant', 'sleazy' and 'rushed' *Porteños*. At least, that is the overall feeling in Rosario. They are proud of their own cultural heritage, which includes supporting local teams. During a *quinceañeros* party a fanatic Newell's fan stood up for Rosarian football and said: 'what they can do (referring to the *Porteños*) we can do better, especially if we are talking about football passion'.

6.4 Symbolism; Usage and meaning of songs, art, artifacts and attributes

A simple visit to a home game of Newell's means a ninety minute long experience filled with rituals and symbols. The stadium is filled with flags and banners, while fans dress themselves in t-shirts with provoking prints referring to their rivals. Throughout the game, fans chant as loud as they can to support their team and to provoke the opponent *hinchada*.

But how do the fans dress and what do they express by the way they dress? Although not everybody dresses itself in the club colors, the majority dresses itself according to this unwritten dress code. Official match jerseys, fake articles and caps are worn and people who do not wear Newell's clothing often do wear the club colors by wearing a red or black shirt from other South American or European teams. The honoring of the club colors is really an interesting thing, as people would even outside the stadium think you are a Newell's fan while just wearing a black and red t-shirt. It happens that one is applauded and welcomed as a Newell's fan, while he is actually entering a bar wearing the red and black jersey of the Brazilian team Flamengo. The fact that Argentina and Brazil have

historically been rivals -especially in the field of football- doesn't seem to bother the fans, who consider the colors more important than the origin of their jersey.

Many fans however do not wear football jerseys, but wear cotton shirts with prints, often with provocations referring to rival Rosario Central or pointing out historical success of the team or the *hinchada*. Many examples of texts which can be found inside the *Coloso del Parque* stadium on the printed t-shirts worn by the fans can be given. Fans wear shirts with a prohibited sign in which speakers are displayed, accompanied with the text: *Los Antiparlantes* or the anti-speakers. This text refers to the fact that Rosario Central fans once brought speakers to the stadium to increase the volume of their chanting. Newell's fans consider this as a weakness, as it means for them that the fans of Central need tools to support their team as they can't do it by themselves. Another humiliating text for Central fans is 1974, often accompanied with the text: *'Tu peor humillación'*, referring to the 1974 Championship, when Newell's won their first national title in an away match against Rosario Central.

As mentioned earlier, Maradona –despite the fact that he just played a few games- is also honored as a former player of Newell's. His name is often displayed as D10S (combining the words Dios (God) and squad number 10), proudly accompanied by *'fue rojinegro'* (saying he wore the black and red club colours). The 2004 away game against Independiente was –as earlier mentioned- visited by 40.000 *Newellistas*. It increases one's status to have been there witnessing Newell's win their sixth title, and fans in the stadium wear shirts referring to that day. Combinations such as: *"40.000 de visitante, el más popular"* or *"39.999 y yo"* –respectively meaning "40.000 away fans, the most popular team" and "39.999 fans and I"– are often seen.

As can be seen above, prints on shirts are usually meant to memorize historical events, such as club heroes and special achievements, which are considered to be a unique part of Newell's history and aiming to demonstrate the greatness of the club, especially in comparison with their rival.

Many fans also wear tattoos representing their loyalty to the club. The great majority of the tattooed fans (and many, many Argentines have tattoos) is carrying club related tattoos with lines such as: NOB, Newell's or *Leproso*.

Besides clothing and tattoos, fans use artifacts as fan ship tools or objects to express their fan ship. Within this context we can think about banners and flags, which have an important position in the Argentine football stadium. The Newell's Old Boys home ground is no exception.

Banners and flags in the stadium are mostly not directed to the team, but show the neighborhoods represented by the fans, such as *Bella Vista*, *Zona Sur*, but also *barrios* and *filiales* from other cities such as Buenos Aires. Not only the neighborhoods are expressed through banners and flags, but also the historical achievements –just like in the printed shirts- are remembered and honored. Small poetic

and word game like texts complement the scene. Expressions such as: *Tengo una enfermedad incurable* (I have an incurable disease, referring to the nickname *Lepra* of the Newell's *hinchada*) or *La Hinchada Que Nunca Abandona* (the *hinchada* that never abandons, sometimes shorted as LHQNA, referring to a historical event where fans of Central left the stadium before the game was finished because their team was losing).



Fig.1 Newell's fans and a flag memorizing the '74 Championship win against Central

Besides the signs of rivalry in the stadiums, the usage of objects is also ever present on the streets of Rosario. Graffiti and Murals can be found on every neighborhood wall throughout the city, also aiming to provoke or to honor historical successes. Fans paint traffic signs, curbstones and telephone poles in the club colors, covering the city in blue, yellow, red and black, constantly remembering the local people of the ongoing rivalry.

In a personal encounter with *Galgo*, a 19-year-old fanatic fan, who sees it as his calling to turn Rosario (or at least his neighborhood) into a red and black art work, he and his friends told me they wake up at three or four o'clock in the morning to paint walls in the city for several hours. Afterwards they sleep a few hours before every body takes off to go to their job or their school.



Fig.2 Painting of an abandoned house by Galgo & co. in Zona Oeste

They claim that Rosario Central also has groups of fans who paint the city but they have an agreement with the police to let them do their job, which has been confirmed to me by fanatic *Canallas*. The group to which *Galgo* belongs, however, commits its activities in the early morning, as they are haunted by law enforcement. He mentioned that he doesn't care about ending up in a police cell every now and then, because he can not let the colors blue and yellow dominate the city. Belonging to one of the most fanatic groups of fans- the active *hinchas*-, they refuse to call the *Centralistas* 'Canallas'. Although this word originally already is an insult, it is now a name carried with pride by the fans of Rosario Central, and therefore they [Newell's fans] do not consider it appropriately to 'honor' them with that nickname. Instead, they prefer to call them 'SiNa', referring to '*sin aliento*' or 'those without a breath'.

Away from the streets and back to the stadium: another tool of expression for the fans is their voice. By chanting and cheering they support their team throughout the competition. But what exactly do the fans express by chanting in the stadium? What is the purpose of the songs? Before the game, players who previously played for Newell's, but now play for the opposing squad are saluted and honored. Once part of Newell's, always part of Newell's. Songs are mainly ment to honor the *hinchada* (*soy leproso, soy de newell's*, etc.), to remember historical achievements (the same as mentioned on the t-shirts and the flags, banners and neighborhood walls) or aim to provoke the *hinchada* of the opponent, by insulting them or claiming that their side is less fanatic. It seems like there is – besides the game on the pitch – another game going on to decide which *hinchada* is the most fanatic one. The fact that in the stadium of rival Central more or less the same songs are sung (with minor changes in lyrics), points out

that it is not about originality but about who is performing it the best. Below two songs of both sides are displayed to insult their rivals by referring to several historical events:

Songs by the Newell's Old Boys *hinchada*

Canalla, Canalla, Canalla

Canalla yo te vi campeón
 No sé si en el tunel del tiempo
 O en una de ciencia ficción
 Qué feo es ser Canalla, son cagones
 Al Parque no lo pueden ni pisar
 Los trapos los dejás en Arroyito
 Y no llenás ni media popular

Bastard, Bastard, Bastard

Basterd, I saw you being the champion
 I don't remember whether it was in a the time tunnel
 or in a science fiction movie
 It's bad to be a Bastard, you're wimps
 You can't even step foot at El Parque
 You leave your banners in Arroyito
 You can't even fill half your *popular*

The word '*Canalla*' in the first and second line of the song refers to the nickname of Rosario Central. They received this name as they refused to play a benefit game for patients suffering from leprosy in the 1920s. Newell's Old Boys did play in that match, so they were given the nickname *Leprosos*, or people who suffer from leprosy. The third and fourth line is meant to tease the opponent by referring to the fact that they haven't won any trophy since the 1986-1987 season. The last four lines all refer to club loyalty and dedication as it claims that –unlike the *Newellistas*- the central fans are scared, not cheering and the stadium remains half empty during match days.

Central vos sos de la B

Salís corriendo adonde sea
 Central vos sos de la B
 Vendés los trapos por dos monedas
 Es tu ilusión salir primero
 Pero vos no tenes huevos
 Es mi ilusión que alguna vez
 Vengas al parque y no te cagués
 Como olvidarme de aquella tarde
 Ocho de Marzo del día del padre
 Como olvidarme de aquella tarde
 Con la reserva te cogí en el parque

Central, you belong in the B

Everywhere you go, you run away
 Central, you belong in the B
 You sell you're banners for two coins
 It's your illusion that you'll finish first
 But you do not have the balls
 It's my illusion that one day
 You come to the park and do not shit yourself
 How can I forget about that afternoon
 The 8th of march, Father's Day
 How can I forget about that afternoon
 That the reserves nailed you in the park.

This second *Newellista* aims not only to insult the opponent by claiming they belong in the second division (La 'B' stands for the 2nd Division) and by claiming that they are not fierce (they don't have balls, they are scared) and loyal enough (practically giving their banners away, in stead of defending

them). Above all it refers to the historical achievement on the 8th of March in 1992, as discussed in in the previous section, when the reserves won against the first team of Rosario Central.

Songs by the Rosario Central *hinchada*

POR ESO YO SOY DE CENTRAL

Los pecho frío compraron una estrella
ya todos saben que López la pagó
la última fecha en cancha del amargo
vos nunca alentaste, y eso que eras campeón?
sos pecho frío lo sabe todo el mundo
ser grande no se compra y esa es tu humillación.
Por eso yooo soy de Central
y nunca voy a pagar
vamos a salir campeones
con los pibes de Central

THAT'S WHY I'M A CENTRAL FAN

The cold-chests bought themselves a star
everybody knows that López bought it
The last fixture on the ground of Boca
you never cheered and you call yourself a champion?
You're a cold-chest, everybody knows that
Being the best is not for sale and that's your humiliation
That's why I'm a Central fan
and I am never going to pay
We're going to be champions
with the guys from Central

This song is filled with symbolic references to historical events. First of all, the nickname *pecho frío* (could chest) is used by *Centralistas* as an insult to *Newellistas*, by claiming that they do not have love for their team (don't have a warm heart). This insult is throughout the city visualized as a portrait of a penguin, which is also sometimes used as a nickname. The claim in the song that they bought themselves a star refers to the ongoing discussion whether Newell's have won five or six titles as mentioned earlier. The line in which is mentioned that everybody knows that López bribed that game is an insinuation based on the fact that most people from Rosario (including *Newellistas*) consider him (the Newell's club president) to be a Mafiosi. The phrase 'being the best is not for sale and that's your humiliation' turns around the '1974 *En Tu Cancha y En Tu Cara*' remembrance, which is earlier mentioned and explained in the section on expressions on fan clothing.

CARNAVAL CANALLA

Yo lo tengo a Olmedo, lo tengo al Che,
y vos qué carajo tenés?
un equipo cagón que abandona,
hinchas putos que rompen carnets.
En mi nombre está el nombre de la ciudad,
el tuyo no se dónde es
son tan putos que hace cien años
llevan puesto un nombre inglés.
Carnaval...carnaval...
el carnaval es el pueblo, el pueblo es hincha de Central
Carnaval...carnaval...

CANALLA CARNAVAL

I have Olmedo, I have Che
And what the hell do you have?
A shitty team that abandons
Loser fans who rip their membership cards
In my name, the name of the city is represented
in yours I don't know where it is
You're such assholes that over a hundred years
You have been carrying an English name
Carnaval...carnaval...
Carnaval is the people, and the people are Central fan
Carnaval...carnaval...

el carnaval es el pueblo, el pueblo es hincha de Central
 Vamo Lacadé, vamo Lacadé
 Vamo Lacadé, vamo Lacadé

Carnaval is the people, and the people are Central fan
 Come on Academy, Come on Academy
 Come on Academy, Come on Academy

The second song I added as an example is also aiming to insult the Newell's fans by both expressing their own pride as well as reminding them of their mistakes in the past. Olmedo and Ernesto 'Che' Guevara are two of the most famous people from Rosario and well know *Centralistas*. The phrase 'Loser fans who rip their membership cards', refers to a *clásico* which was played in the *Copa Libertadores* when Newell's lost 4 to 0 against their rivals and the fans protested by ripping their memberships cards and throwing them away. The references to the English name have to do with the fact that Rosario Central changed their club name in the past to get rid of the English heritage. Therefore, which can also be found in another line of the song, *Centralistas* consider themselves to be fan of the team which is the most popular. It's a club for ordinary people and that way they are legitimizing themselves as being the one and only team in Rosario.

That Rosario refers to the British past of Newell's in the earlier explained song is one of the few references to historical social class differences. As this analysis shows, most references in all types of expressions are made towards club history, its players, its victories in *clásicos* and above all pointing out that their fan community and their *barra brava* are stronger, bigger and fiercer than the other. It's a subjective game, played out over centuries, regarding club culture, history and folklore and despite the fact that differences existed in the early days this is not considered important nowadays. The rivalry between both teams and sense of identification of a fan with a team is nowadays based on culture, values and traditions.

7. Conclusion

Part of life in Rosario is choosing sides in one of the nation's most famous football derbies: Newell's Old Boys versus Rosario Central. Picking one team as one's favorite is a decision influenced by the environment one grows up in. Like in many other aspects of life, one is influenced by the neighborhood, by one's friends and one's family. The identification of a fan with his team is cognitive and the experiences gathered through this choice (fulfillment of the needs for self-esteem, distinctiveness, belongingness, meaning, continuity, and efficacy) decide whether one develops a bond and affection for the team (strong identification) or does not tie with the social group (being a Newell's fan does not become an important part of the self-concept).

This results in the categorization of fans in four categories, namely *la hinchada* (the group of hard core fans), active *hinchas* (actively engaged fans), passive fans (not actively engaged fans) and inactive fans (they picked sides, but have not created a bond with the team). The stronger the sense of 'us' (namely the first two categories, but also present in the third category), the more negative feelings they have towards the 'others' [or Rosario Central within this context] and the more actively engaged they become in the fan movement and the more social competition is shown in rivalry between the fans. As both sides strive for a positive social identity, they actively try to influence the intergroup comparisons (as argued by Hogg and Abrams, 1988) in their own advantage. Once the group image is not in balance (for example due to bad results of the team, or for not showing '*aguante*'), they try to restore the balance by pointing out other aspect in order to keep their positive self image. If one mentions to a Newell's fan that Central's stadium is larger and modern in comparison to the *Coloso del Parque*, he will counter that claim by saying it was sponsored by the junta in the 1970s or that the pitch itself is better in the stadium of Newell's in order to maintain its positive social identity.

The establishment of two rivaling fan communities and the social competition shown nowadays is directly linked with the fierce rivalry between the two clubs (and therefore the two fan movements), which has historically been constructed by the crossing of geographical fracture lines (two major clubs in one city and fans divided by neighborhood) and socio-economical fracture lines (Newell's fans considered to belong to the 'elite', while Central's fans were considered to belong to the working class). The geographical fracture line is still present and visible. The northern part of town geographically belongs to Central, while the centre and southern part belongs to Newell's. Socio-economical differences between the groups do not play a role anymore and has moved to the background.

Therefore the question remains where the Newell's fans identify with nowadays, as stereotypes relating social background and political preferences do not exist nowadays. Ask a *Newellista* where he identifies with and he will respond that Newell's fans have more '*aguante*' and '*aliento*' and that they are more loyal than the fans of Central, giving several examples (the club historical achievements as mentioned earlier). Asking the same question to a *Centralista* will result into a similar response, but he will mention his own examples. Therefore, identification is mostly based on the club's cultural identity (its history, its icons) and the loyalty of the 'us' in comparison the 'others'. Belonging to the team which has the most loyal fans and the greatest history is what the people are proud of. Remarkably, except for the *hinchada*, the fans reject the violence surrounding Argentine football, but speak proudly of the football related achievements of the *barras bravas* as proof of the loyalty and fierceness of the Newell's fans. So to say, fans identify strongly with the club's *hinchada* which is also contradictory as they do not identify with the violence. Fans look up to the *hinchada* as they look up to other club heroes, which are honored through clothing, songs, flags, banners and murals. *Newellistas* speak proudly of their history with Diego Armando Maradona (Argentina's greatest player ever) and Martin Bielsa (world cup winner in '78 and successful coach during the golden period in the early 90's), while they proudly point out which famous Argentines (actors, models, singers, politicians, etc.) are *hincha* of their team.

Fans highlight the previously discussed club icons and history, as both sides have little success nowadays (with the exception of Newell's unexpected tournament win in 2004) and unlike fans in other derbies, can not be categorized by social class, religion or political preference. As the individuals in both groups are similar to each other, both communities have more or less the same size and even the sportive successes of both clubs are comparable, Newell's fans actively try to distinguish them from Rosario Central fans by focusing on particular historical icons and achievements. Even the insignificant events (such as fans leaving a game five minutes earlier as the team is losing) are highlighted (and become significant) by the opposing fans to claim they are more loyal and positively influencing their group image. This way, rivalry in Rosario is kept vivid, because the confrontations between the fans do not only take place twice a year during the *clásicos*. Every (symbolical) defeat by Rosario is celebrated as a victory by rival fans, who actively search for new ways to claim symbolical wins. While the lives of the fans of both teams cross each other, they face and confront each other on a daily base. This all serves a greater cause: by claiming to belong to the fiercest and most loyal group and by highlighting the clubs icons and achievements, fans not only identify with the club, but along with continuously aiming to destruct the cultural tradition of the rival: they shape the club's identity.

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