

# Gustave Le Bon's "*Psychologie des Foules*": A commentary and evaluation

John Drury

University of Sussex

## 1. Introduction

Gustave Le Bon's "*Psychologie des Foules*" (in English, "*The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*") has been called "perhaps the most influential book ever written in social psychology" (G. Allport, 1968, p. 25). It was certainly a best-seller in its time; it was translated into at least 17 languages (Barrows, 1981), and the English edition alone was reprinted 16 times by 1926 (McClelland, 1989). The book was apparently useful to both Hitler and Mussolini, and provided key assumptions in the guidance and training on crowd control employed by police and armies around the world. Can any other text in the discipline claim such popularity and significance? Not only this, but the book's images of the transformation of rational individuals into mindless "barbarians" through immersion in crowds resonates with long-standing representations of the crowd, in both high and popular culture – from the labile mob in Shakespeare's "*Julius Caesar*" to countless newspaper headlines on "mob mentality" – suggesting perhaps that Le Bon's book was a formal systemization of what "common sense" already knows, a full explanation of what is self-evidently true.

And yet "*Psychologie des Foules*" has been found subsequently to be profoundly incorrect in multiple ways – including in terms of its premises (what needs to be explained), its evidence (or lack of), and its hypothesized psychological mechanisms. It has been described more as a work of ideology, for its purpose is to provide justifications for a highly hierarchical society, based on hereditary privilege, racism, and sexism (McClelland, 1989; Reicher & Potter, 1985). Le Bon's "*Psychologie des Foules*" is *classical* (meaning "old"), but the verdict of contemporary social science is that it is not a *classic* (meaning "high quality").

It is a further measure of the impact of Le Bon's little book that every crowd psychologist writing since "*Psychologie des Foules*" was published, whether they agreed or disagreed with him, has had to refer to Le Bon's ideas. The fact that "*Psychologie des Foules*" articulated the ideas, and the fears, of many others writing at the time only emphasises the importance of properly considering the arguments of the book – not least in order to understand exactly what is wrong with them.

In brief, the problems are not his claims that crowds change people, that crowds exhibit “extreme sentiments”, as he puts it, or that that they have an extraordinary sense of power. Decades of research has demonstrated that participating in crowds can indeed be a very emotional experience; and sometimes crowds are extremely violent – certainly people in a crowd are capable of greater violence than they are alone. The real questions are *why* and *how*. A theory (such as Le Bon’s) which understands emotionality as primitive and which sees base violence as inherent in the crowd “mentality” cannot adequately explain why it is that most psychological crowds, even when angry, are not violent, and it cannot explain the specifics of their acts when they are violent.

This commentary and evaluation chapter first provides some context for Le Bon’s “*Psychologie des Foules*”. It overviews the book, and shows how others in the classical tradition responded to its claims. Next, the chapter reviews the research and theory that has attempted to transcend the classical tradition, and which has served to provide the most damning evidence against Le Bon’s arguments. These reactions against Le Bon are described first in relation to sociology and then in psychology, reflecting Le Bon’s dual legacy. Contemporary accounts of crowd psychology do not simply stand as alternatives to Le Bon’s account, however; they also help explain why a model whose popularity is based on its supposed practical usefulness actually creates the danger it purports to solve.

## **2. Le Bon in historical and intellectual context<sup>1</sup>**

“*Psychologie des Foules*” needs to be understood in historical context (Nye, 1975). Despite Le Bon’s claims to have invented crowd psychology,<sup>2</sup> and later statements by others who believed his hype (van Ginneken, 1992, p. 8), he was in fact only one among several early “crowd scientists”. Indeed, both at the time and later, many of his ideas were shown to be highly derivative. What prompted the sudden explosion in writings on the psychology of crowds in late nineteenth-century Europe (in particular France but also Italy and Germany) was the crowd itself. Le Bon refers to the “age of crowds” because of a number of social developments in which the crowd – or more specifically the (perceived) *problem* of the crowd – was central. Workers were becoming organized in unions, and there were a number of high-profile strikes, some of which were associated with violence, although most of these

---

<sup>1</sup> This section draws in particular on the historical studies by Nye (1975), Barrows (1981), and van Ginneken (1992), and the reader is recommended to read these for further contextual information.

<sup>2</sup> He also claimed to have invented the theory of relativity before Einstein (Barrows, 1981, p. 178)

labour disputes and actions were peaceful. More dramatically, France had seen revolutions in 1789, 1830, and 1848, in which the crowd was prominent. The architecture of Paris today is a monument to the authorities' fear of the crowd (van Ginneken, 1992). After 1848, the streets were transformed by Baron Haussmann from narrow alleys to long, straight boulevards; this made it easier to dismantle the crowd's barricades as well as to charge at and shoot the crowd from distance.

From the perspective of the gentlemen scholars, the most shocking of all these tumultuous events – the worst “crowd horror” – was the Paris Commune of 1871. In these events, Paris constituted itself as an independent socialist republic, led by workers. The commune was armed, and ruthless against its enemies. During the commune, Le Bon organized a body of volunteer ambulances. He subsequently produced a number of autobiographical accounts of his experiences of the events (Barrows, 1981, p. 163). These were among the numerous writings he produced before the publication of “*Psychologie des Foules*”, which itself also makes references to the events of 1871.

A number of scholars agree that Hippolyte Taine was the first crowd psychologist (e.g., van Ginneken, 1992). Horrified by the events of the Paris Commune, he began work on a monumental history of France that traced what he saw as the decline of civilization to the 1789 revolution with its ideas of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité*. Taine was anti-egalitarian and conservative and viewed modern history as decadence (Barrows, 1981; Nye, 1975, p. 63). He depicted the crowd as a primitive being. What was original in his work was the attempt to use psychology to understand history (hence his “psychohistory”), for Taine explained the “bestial” behaviour of the crowd with “psychological” concepts.

The heyday of the new crowd psychology came a few years later, in the period 1885-1895, and was again prompted by a further wave of crowd events, including strikes, demonstrations, and anarchist terrorism, as well as the “street politics” surrounding the demagogue General Boulanger (Barrows, 1981, p. 8) – the latter is mentioned by name more than once in “*Psychologie des Foules*”. Fournial, Tarde and Sighele were the other crowd psychologists, each of whom published their own work shortly before the appearance of “*Psychologie des Foules*”.

While the apparent threat of the crowd to “civilization” formed the material context for the new crowd psychology, there was also an intellectual context. This included a number of elements that became ingredients of the new theories. First, via Hobbes and Darwin, crowd

scientists drew upon a version of evolutionary anthropology according to which different human “races” were hierarchically related, from primitive to advanced (Nye, 1975). Second, ideas from zoology were appropriated. For example, while Taine (1876) was the first crowd scientist to refer to “contagion”, apparently borrowing from medicine, a version of the same concept can be found in the work of Espinas on sociality in animals (Barrows, 1981; Mitchell, 2012, p. 67). Third, the different schools of hypnosis that were fashionable at this time offered a model (“suggestibility”) for understanding influence and transformation. These were therefore a further key source for the early crowd psychologists (Nye, 1975, pp. 64-5). Fourth, the “mass society” thesis - the idea that society was developing into two sections, a “mass” and an “elite” (Giner, 1976) - offered a way of understanding some of the social processes that accompanied industrialisation. Workers moved from villages to live in the cities to work in the new mills, and the “gentlemen scholars” observing this assumed that in villages order was maintained because everyone knew everybody else and hence could monitor each other’s behaviours. In the crowded city, by contrast, people became an anonymous “mass” (Carey, 1992) and therefore hence beyond control, whether internal or external (Reicher, 1987).

All these different elements came together in Le Bon’s *“Psychologie des Foules”*.

### **3. *“Psychologie des Foules”*: Overview of the book**

Gustave Le Bon wrote a large number of books on science and politics, but *“Psychologie des Foules”* was the book that made him famous, and is the only one of the books on crowds written in the late nineteenth century that is remembered today. Despite the fact that Le Bon claims repeatedly to present a “scientific” account, the style of *“Psychologie des Foules”* is unlike contemporary scientific texts. It contains frequent sweeping statements and assertions.<sup>3</sup> The writing is repetitive and sometimes seems to be rambling. There is a lack of systematic evidence; instead, there are frequent anecdotes. There are no examples of studies using research methods that would be recognized today in psychology. There are uncredited extracts and no proper referencing.

Most of the key ideas of the book are to be found in in Chapter 1, “General characteristics of crowds – psychological law of their mental unity”, and students who want to understand Le Bon’s crowd psychology can focus on this chapter. Here we find the central role of “race”

---

<sup>3</sup> In making his case through affirmations he was perhaps following his own advice to those who seek to manipulate crowds (McClelland, 1989, p. 202)

heredity/evolution as the key factor in crowd psychology, the “law of the mental unity”, and the three psychological mechanisms: submergence (loss of personality through “immersion” in the crowd), suggestibility (like a hypnotic state, which follows from submergence), and contagion (uncritical social influence or any passing sentiment or behaviour, which is an effect of suggestibility). According to *“Psychologie des Foules”*, the fundamental feature of the psychology of crowds is their stupidity, for the mechanisms Le Bon lays out explain why in crowds people – even the most intelligent and civilized – regress to the stage of barbarians, incapable of meaningful thought. The later material on leadership (Chapter 3) builds on the arguments of Chapter 1; much of the leadership model is based on the assumption of the stupidity of crowds.

Large sections of the book do not seem to be about the psychology of crowds at all. In the first place, Le Bon’s object is psychological collectivity more broadly, which he calls the “psychological crowd”, and which might be thought of as the popular mentality (hence the subtitle of the English edition). Thus individuals dispersed across different locations, where they share a common purpose and hence mentality, can be subject to the psychological degradation involved in being part of a “crowd”. In the second place, Le Bon’s emphasis on the role of the fixed “racial” character (or “racial unconscious”) means that the political structure of each society is also fixed (according to Le Bon), and gives him licence to discuss politics. The same logic is behind Le Bon’s argument that educating the public leads only to discontent and frivolity, and that an apprenticeship model – preparing people for their place in society – is preferred (McClelland, 1989).

Le Bon is at pains to emphasize that, though they are useful only for destruction and tend towards violence (reflecting the contents of the “racial unconscious”), crowds can also be heroic, idealistic and altruistic in their behaviour. This is a point he repeats, and it follows from two key ideas. The first is that individual self-interest disappears in the crowd (hence people can die for the cause), and the second is the concept of contagion (i.e., any idea or sentiment can sweep through the crowd, including altruistic impulses). However, in this account such heroism and self-sacrifice is both meaningless (it reflects passing fancies in essentially “fickle” crowds, and has no impact subsequently) and subordinate to the innate destructiveness of the “racial unconscious” (such that impulses consonant with the contents of the “racial unconscious” are those most likely to be influential). Thus the “evolutionary model”, as summarized in the final paragraphs of the book again re-iterates that “race” is more important than anything.

*“Psychologie des Foules”* has been called a “synthesis” (Nye, 1975, p. 60), a work that popularized existing ideas (Mitchell, 2012, p. 65). More bluntly, Le Bon has been called a vulgarizer (Mitchell, 2012; van Ginneken, 1992, p. 380) and a plagiariser (McClelland, 1989). Sighele claimed Le Bon “pirated” his own work (van Ginneken, 1985), and indeed van Ginneke details how ideas of all the other crowd psychologists of the time appear in Le Bon’s book yet with little acknowledgement. Certainly, the references to the “criminal crowd” in *“Psychologie des Foules”* seem to relate to the work of Sighele, who is never mentioned by name. The notion of crowd mentality as primitively “spinal” rather than operating through the brain (Le Bon, p. 23) is arguably that of Fournial (see van Ginneken, 1985, p. 378). Imitation was proposed first by Tarde, and contagion as mentioned was first used in a crowd psychology context was Taine, though Le Bon’s version is much more elaborate than Taine’s. Taine is in fact much cited in *“Psychologie des Foules”*, but for his historical examples not his psychology (van Ginneken, 1992, p. 31).

Commentators suggest that there were two factors that explain why Le Bon’s book was such a success compared to these others. The first is the popularizing already mentioned. Le Bon rendered others’ ideas into an accessible format, shorn of the academic style of his rivals. The second factor is the fact that, while all the other crowd scientists described the horrors of the crowd, only Le Bon’s book offered practical solutions (Barrows, 1981, p. 184). His model of how leaders can manipulate crowds, and his specific advice on rhetoric, operate as tools for those in authority on how to harness the power of the crowd. The claim in *“Psychologie des Foules”* of the inherent malleability of the crowd is a crucial part of the leadership model.

So what is wrong with *“Psychologie des Foules”* as psychological theory? Numerous criticisms have been made since the book was first published, and numerous empirical examples have contradicted its claims. Most of these will be described below in relation to the theorists that proposed alternatives to Le Bon’s account. For now, however, four fundamental problems can be mentioned.

First, there is the issue of Le Bon’s use of evidence (or lack of it). He relied on fragmentary, selective, secondary examples, rather than systematic studies of crowd events. Second, because the use of evidence was so poor, Le Bon was able to sustain his view of the arbitrary violence and fickleness of the crowd. He described incidents of crowd violence shorn of their historical and intergroup context (Reicher, 1987). Thus while we know that the crowds Le Bon was referring to were revolutionary crowds, or crowds involved in industrial disputes,

and we know that where there was violence most of this was meted out by the forces of the state on the crowd, and that crowd violence – even the most brutal – was often in response to a long sequence of attacks (Barrows, 1981), all this disappears in Le Bon’s account, and the violence appears instead as appearing from nowhere except the supposed “racial unconscious”, as a meaningless spasm.

Third, we have seen that while Le Bon acknowledges the “heroic” crowd, he saw crowd violence and stupidity as emblematic of crowd psychology, and therefore does not have the concepts (beyond meaningless “contagion”) to explain the fact that the vast majority of crowds in conflict are not violent, including those who remain peaceful even when provoked.

Fourth, linked to this inability to conceptualise the non-violent crowd is an inability to explain the meaningful limits of behaviour in those crowds that *are* violent. A prediction easily derived from “*Psychologie des Foules*” is that the violence of the crowd would indiscriminate. Some of the best evidence against this claim came from historians of the crowd, who were critical of Le Bon’s accounts of the French Revolution (Rudé, 1964) or who offered an alternative to irrationalist explanations of food riots as instinctual explosions. E. P. Thompson’s (1971) account of the moral economy of the crowd in the eighteenth century food riot is perhaps the best example of this, showing that for all the anger and violence, targets of the crowd were highly selective (the millers and merchants who transgressed against local customs) and constrained (for example the crowd sold the grain for a fair price and returned the folded sacks to the merchant). A theory relying on the contents of a hypothesized primitive “racial unconscious” and arbitrary “contagion” cannot explain why the targets of the food rioters were consonant with their values (their “moral economy”), why these differed systematically from the targets of the crowd in the French Revolution, which in turn reflected existing common values. A different kind of psychology was needed to explain these cases. Unfortunately, that new psychology was a long way off, and for several decades crowd psychologists repeated the assumptions and errors of Gustave Le Bon, even when they set out to challenge him.

#### **4. Extensions and critiques of Le Bon’s “*Psychologie des Foules*” in the “classical” tradition**

We can call the “classical” tradition (or sometimes the “irrationalist” tradition) those approaches to crowd psychology that shared with Le Bon the fundamental assumption that the “mentality” of the crowd is more primitive than that of the individual. In the early

twentieth century, there were a number of theorists in this tradition that followed “*Psychologie des Foules*” in this and other assumptions, but who also added other emphases to the basic approach. Wilfred Trotter’s (1919) “*Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*” pursued the Le Bonian themes of primitive instincts and sacrifice for the cause which he used to explain altruistic phenomena such as young men dying for their country in the first world war (see Van Ginneken, 1992). William McDougall’s (1920) account of the “*Group Mind*” was more sophisticated than that of Le Bon. He suggested that only organized groups had “minds”, and the greater the “group mind” the less likely were crowds to give in to primitive impulses (see Turner, 1987). Freud (1921) devotes a considerable amount of space to Le Bon in his “*Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*” – both praising him effusively (“brilliant” p. 109) and setting out their differences. The Le Bonian “racial unconscious” is more like Jung’s “collective unconscious” than the individual dynamic unconscious of Freud, but it is the ideas on leadership that Freud singles out for criticism. He argues that if the process of becoming suggestible is like hypnosis, then there must be a hypnotist. What is the process whereby someone plays this role? Freud’s answer is parental identification (Freud, 1921, p. 101).

In this period, the major challenge to Le Bon’s position as the leading crowd psychologist came from Floyd Allport (1924a, 1924b). Like all the others in the “classical” tradition, Allport shared Le Bon’s fundamental assumptions: that the psychology of crowds is more primitive and instinctual than that of the lone individual; that because of this stupidity and brutishness, crowds tend to be characteristically and arbitrarily violent; that social influence in crowds was mindless; and that therefore the crowd was a problem, a threat to individual rationality. Where he disagreed with Le Bon was in the location or origin of this primitive psychology. Allport’s ideas reflected the developing behaviourist zeitgeist, particularly when he argued that the “group mind” was unobservable and therefore speculative and unnecessary. Allport’s starting point for the study of crowds was the observation that only nervous systems can support minds; since only individuals have nervous systems the individual should be the proper unit of analysis in the study of crowd psychology. As he put it, “*There is no psychology of groups which is not essentially a psychology of individuals.*” (F. Allport, 1924a, p. 4). The arbitrary violence of people when they were in crowds, he argued, reflected a combination of individual predispositions (both innate and learned) and simple stimulation of other co-present individuals. This simple stimulation causes “fundamental (individual) drives” (self-protection, hunger, sex) to overcome the civilized



values that normally control behaviour. Thus, according to Allport, social influence was not a matter of “contagion” – people were not influenced by just any passing emotion; rather, others’ actions stimulated existing dominant tendencies within each individual. The differences between Allport and Le Bon echoes an earlier difference of emphasis among crowd psychologists: that between Sighele, who emphasised the pre-existing dispositions of “criminal” individuals in the crowd, and Tarde, who like Le Bon emphasized qualitative “transformation” of individuals into a crowd.

Group mind approaches disappeared after the 1920s (G. Allport, 1968, p. 53), and crowd psychology itself disappeared from the textbooks for a number of years. Its salience in social psychology seems to have fluctuated with the perceived importance of “the crowd” as a social issue – hence there was a resurgence of interest in the USA in the late 1960s and in the UK in the 1980s. New responses to Le Bon’s *“Psychologie des Foules”*, both critical and less critical, first appeared in the 1950s, however. Sociological developments will be covered in the next section. The key psychological development was “de-individuation” theory (or, more accurately, theories, since the term covers a variety of related models).

From the beginning, “de-individuation” theorists expressed their debt to Le Bon (see Festinger, Pepitone, & Newcomb, 1952). However, while they retained key features of his framework – anonymity/submergence, loss of self, loss of behavioural control, reduction in critical judgement, and antisocial behaviour – they dropped the notion of a group mind or racial unconscious (see Diener, 1980; Prentice-Dunn & Rogers, 1989; Zimbardo, 1970). The most obvious departure from *“Psychologie des Foules”* was the use of the laboratory experiment, which was now long-established as the preferred research method for scientific psychology. What turned out to be useful about this was that it allowed for the systematic testing and clear debunking of two of the foundational claims of both Le Bon and “de-individuation” theory. The first was the idea that anonymity had the generic effect of increasing tendencies to antisocial behaviour, and the second was that the mechanism behind this supposed effect was the loss of self. For a number of years, evidence for the first of these claims (the second was harder to test) was contradictory: sometimes anonymity led to more *prosocial* behaviours, for example (Gergen, Gergen & Barton, 1973; Johnson & Downing, 1979). This pattern was explained, and “de-individuation” theory killed off, by a comprehensive meta-analysis (Postmes & Spears, 1998) which found little evidence for a generic effect of anonymity (the content of behaviour depends more on which identity and norms is salient) and little evidence for loss of self. In a reframing of previous results

combined with conceptual replications of well-known “de-individuation” experiments, Reicher, Spears, and Postmes, (1995) demonstrated that “immersion” in a group leads not to abandonment of norms but more conformity to those norms, particularly where the means of “immersion” itself (such as most of the manipulations used in “de-individuation” experiments) served to reduce cues for personal identity and made salient the group context. Thus, where people did use the cloak of anonymity to carry out actions they normally felt constrained from doing, these actions were found to be in line with their identities and values rather than arbitrary.

Overall, classical reactions to “*Psychologie des Foules*” not only repeated Le Bon’s assumptions, but also were guilty of the same profound errors indicated earlier: reliance on selective evidence; decontextualization; inability to explain both patterns of non-violence and violence in crowds. The major contributions – Allport’s theory and “de-individuation” were guilty of most of these problems. They each represented an advance insofar as they dropped the baggage of the “group mind”; but in the posited content of behaviour in crowds, their suggestions were little different than Le Bon’s “racial unconscious”.<sup>4</sup> Allport advocated the experimental method, and despite being relying on this more scientific approach, “de-individuation” theory continued to perpetuate a distorted crowd psychology. Sociological critics, however, introduced new concepts that created the basis of transcending the limitations of Le Bon’s book.

### **5. Striving to escape “*Psychologie des Foules*”: Social norms and rationality in sociology**

From the late 1950s onwards, the major alternative theory in sociology to that expressed in Le Bon’s “*Psychologie des Foules*” was R. H. Turner and Killian’s (1957) emergent norm theory. For them, the issue was not the threat of the crowd to civilization, but the variety of different forms of crowd behaviour, from the less to the more organized, and from the mundane to the dramatic, that took shape in “extraordinary” situations. In order to comprehend this variety, and in particular to explain what they saw as the gradual development of social structure in a crowd, Turner and Killian drew upon two intellectual sources. First was the collective behaviour approach of their supervisor Herbert Blumer (e.g., Blumer, 1951), who himself took elements from Le Bon’s book alongside ideas from George Herbert Mead, thereby combining primitive psychology with symbolic interactionism, which

---

<sup>4</sup> In fact, Allport’s predictions for the content of behaviours in crowds were even more narrow than Le Bon’s, because he found no place for “heroic” behaviours.

was a more sophisticated process of meaning-making. The second key source for emergent norm theory was the small group Gestalt psychology of Muzafer Sherif (1936), whose experimental work had suggested that in conditions of uncertainty *norms* (shared rules for conduct) emerged gradually through interpersonal interaction.

Turner and Killian agreed with Le Bon that “suggestibility” played a role in crowds, but conceptualised this as an individual difference (see McPhail, 1991, pp. 78-79). Their arguments that crowds arose in social breakdowns and were initially “normless” also owed much to the classical tradition. But in introducing the concept of social norms to the study of crowd behaviour, their work represents a vital break from the classical past; for the first time, crowd behaviour was understood as structured by shared understandings of the upper limits of behaviour. Thus, there was no “spiral of contagion” (Turner, 1964). Rather, interaction and social influence was to an important degree a shared sense-making process (operating through milling, rumour, and key-noting).

The introducing the concept of social norm to the explanation of crowd behaviour was significant; contra “*Psychologie des Foules*”, it suggested that normal social life and crowd behaviour operated by the same principles. As well as providing conceptual parsimony, the concept of norm helped make sense of the variety of patterns of crowd behaviour – from urban riots to hippy festivals (Turner & Killian, 1972).

For others in (North American) sociology, “breakdown” or “strain” theories like emergent norm theory kept alive the spirit of Le Bonian irrationalism, which could only be exercised by embracing forms of rationalism (Mueller, 1992). Thus in resource mobilization theory, there was an equation of “psychology” with Le Bonian crowd psychology; and the solution to the latter was therefore to expunge psychology from their models. Resource mobilization theorists argued that “grievance” (which they linked to emotion and breakdown) was a much weaker predictor of mobilization than organization. They pointed out, for example, that native Americans, Black people and women had suffered strain and discontent (disadvantage) constantly for many years, but they only mobilized in the 1960s and 1970s, when they had the organizational capacity (Mayer, 1991). Far from being inherently stupid, therefore, collectives were as rational as individuals.

Other rationalist revolts against Le Bonianism in sociology did allow for a psychology of collectives, though one which sounded like the rational-actor mirror-image of Le Bon’s barbarian. Thus Berk (1974) drew upon game theory to suggest that targets in riots reflected

each rioter's judgement of costs and benefits. Thus Berk and Aldrich's (1972) analysis of riots in 15 US cities found that patterns of looting and damage were selective, not random and indiscriminate (personal gain and anti-White establishment) which they suggested reflected conscious interests. And Myers (2000), in his event history analysis of the spread of rioting, is careful to argue that "contagion" is certainly not Le Bon's mindless and indiscriminate social influence, but rather is "*a rational form of inter-actor influence in which potential actors observe and evaluate the outcomes of others' behaviours and then make a decision for themselves about whether or not to adopt the behaviour*" (Myers and Przybysz, 2010, p. 64). In each of these cases, the individual determines whether or not to smash a shop window to steal a TV based on cost-benefit analysis.

Students encountering these rationalist approaches to the crowd often comment that one important element that appears to be missing is the role of emotion. The individual of game theory and the other approaches is cold and calculating; s/he has no passion. Here Le Bon has an advantage over the rationalists, for despite all his errors and distortions he at least foregrounds the crucial emotional dimension of experiences in many crowd events (Neville & Reicher, 2011).

Moreover, from a social psychological perspective, what unites these sociological approaches, and indeed what prevents them from transcending one of the key limitations of Le Bon is their failure to properly theorise the self or identity. Le Bon argues that self is just the individual self and it is either present (the lone rational bourgeois individual) or absent (lost in the crowd). He argues that the self-sacrifice of the crowd member for the cause evidences the irrationality of the crowd, because it involves the individual acting "contrary to his most obvious interests" (p. 21). As a narrow rationalist, Berk (1974) logically should agree: someone helping strangers in an emergency, for example, risking their own personal safety, is not acting in their own interests. Indeed, they would only be acting in their own personal interest in such cases if we define those interests in a completely circular way (i.e., whatever they do is rational and in their self-interest).

Emergent norm theory and forms of rationalism are two possible solutions to the problem of Le Bonian irrationalism in crowd theories. Emergent norm theory was surely right to highlight meaning-making, but didn't say enough about the processes or constraints in the interaction process that led to "emergent norms": why this social norm rather than another one? Rationalist approaches like game theory do not say where "interests" and "tastes" come

from, or explain how our “tastes” vary across different group contexts. Both approaches ultimately suffer from the same individualism as Le Bon and the classical tradition in psychology. What was needed to properly transcend “*Psychologie des Foules*” was a theory of the “social individual” – to explain why some behaviours (not others) become normative, and how interests become collective. That theory is described in the next section.

A final point here, however, is that the most important contributions of these traditions in sociology were not just theoretical but rather were methodological. Le Bon’s view of science borrowed narrowly from zoology and medicine; accordingly, he viewed the crowd like an alien object on a petri dish. Allport’s (1924a, 1924b) behaviourism continued this trend. With studies like Berk’s (1974) fine-grained analysis of a study protest we start to hear the voices of people in the crowd. This kind of development reflected not only methodological trends but also changes in society. Whereas Le Bon and his contemporaries largely observed the crowd from the comfort of their armchairs, Berk and others were in the anti-Vietnam protests alongside their students – they could see, therefore, that Le Bon’s concepts of racial unconscious, contagion and so on did not make sense of what was happening. New methods as well as new concepts were necessary to develop an adequate theory.

## **6. Eclipsing “*Psychologie des Foules*”: The social identity approach in social psychology**

In his critique of irrationalist explanations for rioting, Henri Tajfel (1978) argued, “*the dichotomy in the explanations of mass intergroup phenomena is not ... between the rational and the irrational, but between the irrational and the social-cognitive*” (p. 420). In developing the social identity approach, he and John C. Turner therefore situated their theory as a counterpoint to that tradition that emphasized emotion and primitive psychology as the driver of intergroup relations - not only Le Bon but also F. Allport, Freud, frustration-regression, and others they regarded as individualist and reductionist (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity is defined as “*that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his [sic] knowledge of his [sic] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership*” (Tajfel, 1974, p. 69). Social identity theory was a social-cognitive theory, in the sense that it explained phenomena such as ingroup preference in relation to our knowledge of our group membership(s); as each individual had multiple social identities, this would explain why “rationality” (group interest) could vary across group contexts. Turner further developed the concept of social identity into

a theory of group processes, arguing that “*social identity is the cognitive mechanism which makes group behaviour possible*” (Turner, 1982, p. 21).

The fundamental idea in the social identity approach, that we have multiple identities that each provide a basis for collective coordination, was central to the model of crowd behaviour developed by Reicher (1982, 1984, 1987). Thus, against “*Psychologie des Foules*”, Reicher argued that people do not *lose* their sense of self in the crowd; rather they *shift* from personal identity to the identity they share with others. This means, therefore, not loss of control, but rather a shift to *collective* definitions of appropriate conduct – group norms.

Reicher’s social identity model thus developed explicitly as a critique of “*Psychologie des Foules*” and others in the irrationalist tradition, particularly the work of F. Allport and “de-individuation” theory. Against the Le Bonian notion that crowd behaviour in a riot would be mindless and therefore indiscriminate, Reicher’s (1984, 1987) study of the 1980 St Pauls riot found that even the most violent crowd displayed behavioural limits, and these limits reflected the definition of social identity shared by those in the crowd: in St Pauls, there were limits to targets (the crowd attacked the police, not passers-by; they targeted properties associated with their continued powerlessness and poverty, not local homes or shops), geographical limits (they remained within the St Pauls district), and limits in terms of who joined in (only those who identified with St Pauls). Contra “contagion” not everyone was influential and not every behaviour spread (cf. Milgram & Toch, 1969). The most influential people were those who were prototypical of the shared identity in this context (in this case, older Rastafarians); and while the crowd joined in with throwing missiles at police the opposite was the case for throwing missiles at a bus. In addition, this detailed study of the contours of a riot contradicted the most basic assumption of Le Bon and the “de-individuation” family of theories – that people are anonymous in the crowd. In fact, most participants were among people they knew (Reicher & Potter, 1985).

While this early version of the social identity model of crowd behaviour provided a compelling alternative to “*Psychologie des Foules*” in terms of the limits of crowd behaviour, it was a static account that said little about the dynamics of crowd events. And yet change was evident in the very St Pauls riot data; there was a *process* of becoming conflictual over time that was described and not explained. For all its faults, Le Bon’s account addressed something phenomenologically important about many crowd events – that they change people, they imbue them with a sense of power, and that this individual transformation

operates alongside changes in the actions of the crowd over the course of an event. The question was how to theorise these psychological changes without falling back into the Le Bonian notion that they were essentially meaningless – “ripples” in a “deep lake” (Le Bon, p. 99) that would soon be forgotten and have no bearing on subsequent thoughts or feelings?

Methodological as well as conceptual development was required. The study of the St Pauls riot lacked two elements that now needed to be added to subsequent studies. The first was the temporal dimension already mentioned. The second grew from the criticism that Le Bon’s account of the crowd de-contextualized crowd violence; crowd violence occurred in an intergroup as well as an historical context, and could not be properly understood outside of its relationship with other agents such as the police or troops. Thus it was necessary to include in the analysis the perspective and actions of the police as a possible contributor to the events.

By including these two elements in research designs, a similar pattern of *intergroup interaction* between crowd and police was identified across a variety of conflictual crowd events, including student protests (Reicher, 1996a), an anti-poll tax riot (Stott & Drury, 2000), and a series of football crowd conflicts (Stott & Reicher, 1998b). The observation of this pattern of interaction led to the development of the following theses that together constitute the elaborated social identity model (ESIM) of crowd conflict (Drury & Reicher, 2009).

First, the ESIM suggests that the *conditions* necessary for the emergence and development of conflict between a crowd and others outside the crowd (such as the police) are two-fold: (1) *an asymmetry of categorical representations* between crowd participants and this outgroup (for example, where crowd members understand their protest behaviour as legitimate expression of traditional rights, police might define it as a threat to “public order”) and (2) *an asymmetry of power-relations* such that the police outgroup is able to physically impose its definition of legitimate practice on the ingroup of crowd participants (for example, by forming cordons or making baton charges). Second, there is a *dynamic*. If outgroup action is experienced by crowd participants as *illegitimate* (e.g., “an attack on our rights”), it legitimizes crowd action against it (e.g., “self-defence”). Where that outgroup action is also experienced as *indiscriminate* (i.e., as an action against “everyone” in the crowd), then crowd participants adopt a more inclusive ingroup self-categorization, superseding any prior internal divisions. The formation of a single large ingroup social category, along with the feelings of consensus and the expectations of mutual ingroup support that are thereby engendered,

*empowers* members of the crowd ingroup actively to oppose the police outgroup. Such crowd action against the police may confirm police fears of the inherent threat of the crowd, leading to an escalation of riot-control behaviours. Further based work on the ESIM showed that psychological change in crowd events is indeed not a “ripple” but has meaningful psychological consequences subsequently, changing people’s understandings, relations and practices in other areas of their lives (Drury & Reicher, 2000; Vestergren, Drury, & Hammar Chiriatic, 2018).

These social identity concepts and the associated body of research evidence are in most respects diametrically opposed to the ideas expressed in “*Psychologie des Foules*”. Where Le Bon saw psychological crowd membership as a source of weakness (vulnerability, gullibility, lack of self-control), the social identity approach sees it as a source of strength – including empowerment (Drury & Reicher, 1999), resilience (Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009), and self-regulation (Stott, Adang, Livingstone, & Schreiber, 2007). The utility of the social identity approach, and the ultimate failure of “*Psychologie des Foules*” and classical crowd psychology more generally, is evident in the wide range of crowd phenomena that the social identity approach has been applied to in the past 20 years beyond crowd violence, including mass emergency behaviour (Drury, 2018), pedestrian movement (Templeton, Drury, & Philippides, 2018), religious mass gatherings (Hopkins & Reicher, 2017; Alnabulsi, Drury, & Templeton, 2018), crowding (Novelli, Drury, & Reicher, 2010), and computer simulation of crowds (Von Sivers et al., 2016). The supersession of classical crowd psychology and the ascendance of the social identity approach is also evident in trends in recent social psychology textbooks, especially in Europe (e.g., Hewstone Stroebe, & Jonas, 2016; Hogg & Vaughan, 2018; Sutton & Douglas, 2013).

## **7. “*Psychologie des Foules*” in practice**

A remaining question is how it is that a book that is so profoundly wrong can apparently be so useful. Thus for example there is an obvious tension in Barrows’s (1981) insightful historiography when she both demonstrates the ideological basis of Le Bon’s ideas (hence suggesting “*Psychologie des Foules*” comprises distortions and falsehoods), but also argues that the book’s popular success was due to the practical usefulness of Le Bon’s advice on leadership (implying very strongly that the effectiveness of the advice on leadership is evidence of its truth-value). Le Bon’s ideas informed French army (Nye, 1975; Van Ginneken 1985 p. 380) as well as US military thinking in world war II: “*Army writings and*



*officer training on morale, leadership, and battlefield psychology rested substantially on his theory of crowds, particularly regarding races and panic*” (Bendersky, 2007, p. 257). Via the work of Herbert Blumer (e.g., Blumer, 1951), the assumptions and concepts of “*Psychologie des Foules*” also informed the “escalated force” model of policing in the United States from the 1960s onwards (Schweingruber, 2000). In the penultimate section of this commentary and evaluation chapter, I summarize the research on the use of “*Psychologie des Foules*” in two contexts – rhetorical strategies used by fascist political leaders to influence crowds and the crowd control approaches used by police. In the first case I question the extent to which adoption of Le Bon’s ideas or other, different, factors were significant in Hitler and Mussolini’s political speeches; in the second case I question whether the adoption of Le Bon’s ideas by police has been effective in minimizing public disorder.

Chapter 3 of “*Psychologie des Foules*” is devoted to the topic of leadership. Le Bon’s advice to leaders was to keep the message simple, to use assertion and repetition, and to assume contagion. This advice on leadership is consistent with the basic claims of his crowd psychology as a whole, that crowds are incapable of logical or complex thought, and that they are stupid and easily influenced. Famously, both Hitler (e.g., van Ginneken, 1992 p. 186) and Mussolini (Barrows, 1981, p. 179) thanked Le Bon for the use they made of his ideas, suggesting at least anecdotally that the advice was useful.

On the 100-year anniversary of the first English translation publication of “*Psychologie des Foules*”, Reicher (1996b) tested the idea that Mussolini and Hitler’s speeches, and hence their influence over the “masses”, were shaped by Le Bon’s recommendations by closely examining a large number of their speeches. He found that, while some of the *form* of the speeches did reflect the advice – the speeches included the rhetorical devices of repetition and assertion – the specific *content* of these speeches was crucial:

Thus for Hitler, perhaps even more than for Mussolini, the form of rhetoric may be assertive and repetitive, but form cannot be dissociated from content. Indeed, the very ability to condense Nazi ideology into such a simple form is a feature of the ideology itself. Thus, the slogan and the ritualized exchange represent the culmination rather than the antithesis of ideological construction. Like Mussolini, Hitler defines his audience in terms of a particular identity. He also provides a particular definition of what this identity means. Finally, he seeks to obscure the controversial nature of these definitions and thereby render them necessary rather than contingent. The ultimate

achievement of this ideological rhetoric is to deny its ideological basis. (Reicher, 1996b, p. 549)

Indeed, there were crucial qualitative differences between the contents of the two leaders' speeches, in addition to the commonality of their fascist themes. These differences reflected the different social identities evoked by the two leaders. Thus while Mussolini referred to the mythologized Roman past, Hitler referred to a "fatherland" of "blood and soil". Thus, far from relying simply on simplicity and repetition, both leaders "*rooted their rhetoric in a particular construction of social categories through which the audience was defined and by reference to which actions were legitimated*" (p. 535). Clearly, therefore, each speaker rightly judged their audience to be knowledgeable and discriminating enough to respond to their specific references and images, which were carefully crafted. The critical point here, therefore, is that crowds cannot simply be manipulated to do "anything", that the projects they are persuaded to follow must be consonant with their existing identities and values; the effective leader is able to persuade their audience that his/her project embodies these identities and values (Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005).

On the use by the police of "*Psychologie des Foules*" in their crowd control approaches, first of all there is plenty of evidence that the ideas expressed in that book are reflected in police thinking and practices – at least historically in the UK and other countries in Europe (Waddington & King, 2005). Undoubtedly, police assumptions that in crowds people become mindless and liable to violence simply because they are in a crowd in large part reflect the long-standing prevalence in popular discourse of anti-crowd ideas going back many years, independent of Le Bon (e.g., McClelland, 1989). However, there is also evidence in a number of places of a clear practical link to "*Psychologie des Foules*".

Thus some of the guidance produced by the UK police for public order policing quotes the words of Martin (1920) a follower of Le Bon, who states that "*All psychologists seem to agree, that membership of a crowd results in the lessening of an individual's ability to think rationally, whilst at the same time his/her more primitive impulses are elicited in a harmonious fashion with the emerging primitive impulses of all the other crowd members*" (cited in Reicher et al., 2007) – a good summary of key claims of "*Psychologie des Foules*".

A programme of work beginning in the 1990s has analysed police perceptions of crowds. Thus interviews with public order (riot) trained UK police found widespread endorsement of the views that crowds consist of a gullible majority who are easily manipulated or "hi-jacked"

by a powerful violent minority, which in turn meant that all in a crowd are liable to become irrational and violent (Stott & Reicher, 1998a). This pattern of qualitative findings has been replicated and quantified in surveys of police in the UK and Italy (Drury, Stott, & Farsides, 2003; Hoggett & Stott, 2010a, 2010b; Prati & Pietrantonio, 2009).

Of course, it is not just police who hold these kinds of views, and a number of studies demonstrate that members of the public commonly hold similar views of crowds (Drury, 2002; Goodman, Price, & Venables, 2014; Reicher & Potter, 1985). However, while public opinion may be of academic interest, the views of police have practical consequences. Unlike members of the public, police have the capacity (physical and legal powers, organization) to translate their ideas about crowd psychology into reality. Thus the question here is: what are the effects of police using these ideas in their practice?

The interview and survey studies mentioned previously found a link between ideas about mindless, gullible crowds and endorsement of coercive policing practices. Specifically, the Le Bonian-type crowd psychology was used to rationalize police tactics that were experienced by crowd members as both illegitimate (i.e., unfair, disproportionate) and indiscriminate – for example, baton (truncheon) charges against a whole crowd in response to missile-throwing from a minority and cordons (or “kettles”) of a whole crowd (Drury et al., 2003; Stott & Reicher, 1998a). Significantly, as we have seen earlier, these two features of perceived illegitimate and indiscriminate action by police are crucial elements of the dynamic process whereby a peaceful crowd becomes violent, as described in the ESIM (Drury & Reicher, 2009; Reicher 1996a; Stott & Reicher, 1998a). Consistent with this analysis, for example, a multimethod study of a peaceful protest that became a riot found precisely that the senior police officer who first sent riot police into the crowd explained this decision in terms that sound distinctly Le Bonian:

“I don’t know, it’s always hard. I think there were 2000 people causing us problems. Some of those, I am sure, the vast majority were good law abiding people under normal circumstances. But, when you are in a group like that, I am sure that, the fever of the cause, the fever of the day, the throwing and everything else, they get locked together and think ‘oh we are part of this’. Something disengages in their brain. I am not a medical man or an expert in crowd behaviour, but something goes and they become part of the crowd.” (quoted in Stott & Drury, 2000, p. 260).

It was after this intervention that a largely peaceful crowd event, in which only a minority were conflictual, escalated into collective violence in which the majority supported violence against the police. The numerous research examples like this support the conclusion that the form of policing rationalized by “*Psychologie des Foules*” – in which force against the crowd as whole was prioritized and the crowd is treated as incapable of rational discussion – is not only ineffective and dangerous but in effect producing the very angry violent “mob” that the police feared, thus operating as a form of self-fulfilling prophecy.

While this critical analysis existed for a number of years, and while some European police forces were willing to adapt their methods in response (Stott et al., 2007), it wasn't until the UK police were faced by a highly damaging crisis of public order policing that Le Bon and his followers began to be removed from the official guidance and training materials. At a G20 protest in London in 2009, riot police killed Ian Tomlinson, a passer-by, through violently assaulting him in the course of controlling the crowd. In the reform agenda that followed, new principles of “education, facilitation, communication, and differentiation”, based on the social identity approach (Reicher et al., 2007), were recommended at the highest level (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, 2009; Stott, 2009). This is not to say that everyone in the UK police then agreed to reject the Le Bonian “mob mentality” view of crowds (Hoggett & Stott, 2012); but now the new and diametrically opposed principles were being written into key official public-order guidance manual, *Keeping the Peace*, in College of Policing training modules, and even in European Union legislation (Official Journal of the European Union, 2010), weakening Le Bon's grip in this domain.

## **8. Conclusion: Strengths and weaknesses of Gustave Le Bon's “*Psychologie des Foules*”**

One of the strengths of Gustave Le Bon's “*Psychologie des Foules*” is that he foregrounds emotion and empowerment as experiences in crowds. In this regard, those who responded against him by downplaying emotionality lost something vital from their account. The problem was, of course, that Le Bon equated emotion and subjective power with irrationality, meaninglessness, primitive psychology, and delusion. More recent research has restored emotionality to social movements (Goodwin, Jasper, & Polletta, 2000), crowds (Neville & Reicher, 2011), protests (van Zomeren, Leach, & Spears, 2012) and group life more generally (Parkinson, & Manstead, 2015) but without the taint of irrationality, by showing that cognition and affect are not counterpoised but mutually implicative.

Another strength is that *“Psychologie des Foules”* puts the crowd at the centre not only of social science but of politics and society itself. More recently, Reicher (2011) argued that the crowd is a context where so many of the key phenomena of social psychology can be studied – including leadership and power, conformity and minority influence, identity expression and creation – and therefore it should be the centre of the social science (Reicher 2011). Sadly, for many years the crowd was neglected, an “elephant man” on the periphery of mainstream psychology, and the dream of the early crowd scientists of a new social science of the crowd, between sociology and psychology, was never realised. There is a very strong case for arguing that it was precisely the irrationalist approaches of Le Bon, Allport, “de-individuation” theory and other that served to relegate the crowd to an oddity or anomaly on the margins of the discipline of social psychology. How could the crowd be integrated with the standard group psychology topics while it was claimed that the latter could be explained in terms of normative and informational processes (Asch, 1952), but the former was a completely different kind of group that had to be explained by a reversion to “primitive instincts”?

The weaknesses of *“Psychologie des Foules”* are both profound and manifold. They begin with the lack of evidence and include the erroneous assumptions and concepts, captured in Reicher and Potter’s (1985) distinction between two sorts of biases: political bias (anti-collectivist premises) and bias of perspective (outsider viewpoint according to which, because one cannot see the reasons behind crowd members’ actions, they are assumed to have no reasons). They end with the application of Le Bonian ideas to the practical question of controlling crowds, which research has shown to be as dangerous as it is misleading.

In summary, contra the claims of *“Psychologie des Foules”*, the overwhelming conclusion of research is that crowd behaviour, including crowd violence, is not mindless but mostly selective, reflecting shared norms and definitions of identity. Crowds are not stupid or irrational but act on the basis of social logics, or “rationalities”, based on their social identities. What makes collective behaviour possible is not a common “racial unconscious” and contagion, but again a shared social identity and the common norms associated with it. Emotion and empowerment are indeed important, but these are meaningful and cognitive, not primitive and delusional. Politically, change in crowd events is meaningfully related to context and may have both psychological and social consequences – the crowd is not useful only for destruction but is also an agent in history (Drury & Reicher, 2018). Finally,

behaviour spreads not through mindless contagion, but through self-relevance based on shared identity (Drury, 2016).

A number of scholars have argued that Le Bon's famous book is more ideology than scientific psychology, reflecting the fears, hopes and partial perspective of a certain section of society at a certain time in history (McClelland, 1989, p. 200; Reicher & Potter, 1985). It is no coincidence that Le Bon's ideas found favour with fascists – he has been called the architect of the New Right (Barrows, 1981) – because his distortions, particularly on “race” hierarchy, reflected and justified their world-view.

Le Bon's “*Psychologie des Foules*” is an extremely important book. But this importance, and its interest today, lies in its place in history, as a reference point, not for the insights it can provide on crowd psychology.

### **Acknowledgements**

The work in writing this chapter was supported by a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council (“Beyond contagion: Social identity processes in involuntary social influence”, grant number ES/N01068X/1) to John Drury, Stephen Reicher, and Clifford Stott. I would like to thank Sanjeedah Choudhury for assistance in preparing this chapter.

### **References**

- Allport, F. H. (1924a). *Social psychology*. Boston, NJ: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Allport, F. H. (1924b). The group fallacy in relation to social science. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 19, 60-73.
- Allport, G. W. (1968). The historical background of modern social psychology. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 1–80). Oxford, UK: Addison-Wesley.
- Alnabulsi, H., Drury, J., & Templeton, A. (2018). Predicting collective behaviour at the Hajj: Place, space, and the process of cooperation. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*. 373: 20170240. DOI: 10.1098/rstb. 2017. 0240
- Asch, S. E. (1952). *Social psychology*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Barrows, S. (1981). *Distorting mirrors: Visions of the crowd in late nineteenth century France*. Yale, CT: Yale University Press.
- Bendersky, J. W. (2007). "Panic": The impact of Le Bon's crowd psychology on US military thought. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 43(3), 257-283.
- Berk, R. (1974). A gaming approach to crowd behaviour. *American Sociological Review*, 39, 355-373.
- Berk, R., & Aldrich, H. E. (1972). Patterns of vandalism during civil disorders as an indicator of selection of targets. *American Sociological Review*, 37, 533-547.
- Blumer, H. (1951). Social movements. In A. M. Lee (Ed.), *New outline of the principles of sociology* (pp. 199-220). New York: Barnes and Noble.
- Carey, J. (1992). *The intellectuals and the masses*. London: Faber.
- Diener, E. (1980). Deindividuation: The absence of self-awareness and self-regulation in group members. In P. B. Paulus (Ed.), *Psychology of group influence* (pp. 209-242). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Drury, J. (2002). "When the mobs are looking for witches to burn, nobody's safe": Talking about the reactionary crowd. *Discourse & Society*, 13(1), 41-73.
- Drury, J. (2016, May 23<sup>rd</sup>). Explaining involuntary influence: Beyond contagion. Available at <https://blogs.sussex.ac.uk/crowdsidentities/2016/05/23/beyondcontagion/>
- Drury, J. (2018). The role of social identity processes in mass emergency behaviour: An integrative review. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 29(1), 38-81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2018.1471948>
- Drury, J., Cocking, C., & Reicher, S. (2009). The nature of collective resilience: Survivor reactions to the 2005 London bombings. *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*, 27, 66-95.
- Drury, J. & Reicher, S. (1999). The intergroup dynamics of collective empowerment: Substantiating the social identity model. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 2, 381-402.
- Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (2000). Collective action and psychological change: The emergence of new social identities. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 579-604.

- Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (2009). Collective psychological empowerment as a model of social change: Researching crowds and power. *Journal of Social Issues, 65*, 707-725. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.2009.01622.x
- Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (2018). The conservative crowd? How participation in collective events transforms participants' understandings of collective action. In B. Wagoner, F. Moghaddam, & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *From rage to revolution: Models of dramatic social change* (pp. 11-28). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Drury, J., Stott, C., & Farsides, T. (2003). The role of police perceptions and practices in the development of "public disorder". *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 33*, 1480-1500.
- Festinger, L., & Pepitone, A., & Newcomb, T. (1952). Some consequences of deindividuation in a group. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 47*, 382-389.
- Freud, S. (1900). *The interpretation of dreams*. (Trans. J. Strachey). Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Freud, S. (1901). *The psychopathology of everyday life*. (Trans. J. Strachey). Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Freud, S. (1921). Group psychology and the analysis of the ego. (Trans. J. Strachey) In A. Dickson (Ed.), *Civilization, Society, Religion* (pp. 91-178). Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Gergen, K. J., Gergen, M. M., & Barton, W. H. (1973). Deviance in the dark. *Psychology Today, 7*(5), 129-131.
- Giner, S. (1976). *Mass society*. London: Martin Robertson.
- Goodwin, J., Jasper, J., & Polletta, F. (2000). The return of the repressed: The fall and rise of emotions in social movement theory. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly, 5*(1), 65-83.
- Goodman, S., Price, S. A., & Venables, C. (2014). How members of the public account for the England Riots of summer 2011. *Applied Psychological Research Journal, 1*(1), 34-49.
- Hewstone, M., Stroebe, W., & Jonas, K. (Eds.). (2016). *An introduction to social psychology*. John Wiley & Sons.



- Hogg, M. A., & Vaughan, G. M. (2018). *Social psychology* (8th edition). Harlow, UK: Pearson.
- Hoggett, J., & Stott, C. (2010a). Crowd psychology, public order police training and the policing of football crowds. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 33(2), 218-235.
- Hoggett, J., & Stott, C. (2010b). The role of crowd theory in determining the use of force in public order policing. *Policing and Society: An International Journal of Research and Policy*, 20, 223-236. DOI: 10.1080/10439461003668468
- Hoggett, J., & Stott, C. (2012). Post G20: The challenge of change, implementing evidence-based public order policing. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*, 9(2), 174-183.
- Hopkins, N., & Reicher, S. D. (2017). Social identity and health at mass gatherings. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(7), 867-877.
- Johnson, R. D., & Downing, L. L. (1979). Deindividuation and valence cues: Effects on pro-social and anti-social behaviour. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37, 1532-1538.
- Le Bon, G. (1895). *The crowd: A study of the popular mind*. London: Ernest Benn.
- Martin, E. D. (1920). *The behaviour of crowds*. London: Ernest Benn
- Mayer, M. (1991). Social movement research in the United States: A European perspective. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 4, 459-480.
- McClelland, J. S. (1989). *The crowd and the mob: From Plato to Canetti*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- McDougall, W. (1920). *The group mind: A sketch of the principles of collective psychology, with some attempt to apply them to the interpretation of national life and character*. New York: GP Putnam's sons..
- McPhail, C. (1991). *The myth of the madding crowd*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Milgram, S., & Toch, H. (1969). Collective behavior: Crowds and social movements. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (2nd ed., Vol. 4, pp. 507–610). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

- Mitchell, P. (2012). *Contagious metaphor*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Mueller, C. M. (1992). Building social movement theory. In A. D. Morris & C. M. Mueller (Eds.), *Frontiers in social movement theory* (pp. 3-25). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Myers, D. (2000). The diffusion of collective violence: Infectiousness, susceptibility, and mass media networks. *American Journal of Sociology*, 106(1), 173-208.
- Myers, D., & J. Przybysz. (2010). The diffusion of contentious gatherings in the Captain Swing uprising. In S. Poole & A. Spicer (Eds.), *Captain Swing reconsidered: Forty years of rural history from below* (Vol. 32, pp. 62-84). Winchester, UK: Southern History Society.
- Neville, F., & Reicher, S. (2011). The experience of collective participation: Shared identity, relatedness and emotionality. *Contemporary Social Science*, 6(3), 377-396.
- Novelli, D., Drury, J., & Reicher, S. (2010). Come together: Two studies concerning the impact of group relations on 'personal space'. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49, 223–236. DOI:10.1348/014466609X449377
- Nye, R. A. (1975). *The origins of crowd psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the crisis of mass democracy in the Third Republic*. London: Sage.
- Official Journal of the European Union (2010). Council Resolution of 3 June 2010.
- Parkinson, B., & Manstead, A. S. (2015). Current emotion research in social psychology: Thinking about emotions and other people. *Emotion Review*, 7(4), 371-380.
- Postmes, T., & Spears, R. (1998). De-individuation and anti-normative behaviour: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 123, 238-259.
- Prati, G., & Pietrantoni, L. (2009). Elaborating the police perspective: The role of perceptions and experience in the explanation of crowd conflict. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 991-1001.
- Prentice-Dunn, S., & Rogers, R. W. (1989). Deindividuation and the self-regulation of behavior. In P. B. Paulus (Ed.), *Psychology of group influence* (pp. 87-109). (Second edition.) Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Reicher, S. D. (1982). The determination of collective behaviour. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (pp. 41-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reicher, S. D. (1984b). The St Pauls' riot: An explanation of the limits of crowd action in terms of a social identity model. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *14*, 1-21.
- Reicher, S. D. (1987). Crowd behaviour as social action. In J. C. Turner, M. A. Hogg, P. J. Oakes, S. D. Reicher, & M. S. Wetherell. *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory* (pp. 171-202). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Reicher, S. (1996a). "The Battle of Westminster": Developing the social identity model of crowd behaviour in order to explain the initiation and development of collective conflict. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *26*, 115-34.
- Reicher, S. (1996b). "The Crowd" century: Reconciling practical success with theoretical failure. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *35*(4), 535-553.
- Reicher, S. (2011). Mass action and mundane reality: An argument for putting crowd analysis at the centre of the social sciences. *Contemporary Social Science*, *6*(3), 433-449.
- Reicher, S., Haslam, S. A., & Hopkins, N. (2005). Social identity and the dynamics of leadership: Leaders and followers as collaborative agents in the transformation of social reality. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *16*(4), 547-568.
- Reicher, S., & Potter, J. (1985). Psychological theory as intergroup perspective: A comparative analysis of "scientific" and "lay" accounts of crowd events. *Human Relations*, *38*(2), 167-189.
- Reicher, S. D., Spears, R., & Postmes, T. (1995). A social identity model of deindividuation phenomena. *European Review of Social Psychology*, *6*(1), 161-198.
- Reicher, S., Stott, C., Drury, J., Adang, O., Cronin, P., & Livingstone, A. (2007). Knowledge-based public order policing: Principles and practice. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, *1*, 403-415.
- Rudé, G. F. (1964). *The crowd in history: A study of popular disturbances*. London: Lawrence & Wishart Limited.
- Schweingruber, D. (2000). Mob sociology and escalated force: Sociology's contribution to repressive police tactics. *Sociological Quarterly*, *41*(3), 371-389.

- Sherif, M. (1965). *The psychology of social norms*. New York: Octagon books. (Originally published 1936).
- Stott, C. J. (2009). Crowd psychology and public order policing. Report submitted to the HMIC inquiry into the policing of the London G20 protests. Available from [http://www.epcollegeonline.com/pluginfile.php/7426/mod\\_folder/content/0/Dr\\_Clifford\\_Scott\\_Crowd\\_Psychology\\_and\\_Public\\_Order\\_Policing.pdf?forcedownload=1](http://www.epcollegeonline.com/pluginfile.php/7426/mod_folder/content/0/Dr_Clifford_Scott_Crowd_Psychology_and_Public_Order_Policing.pdf?forcedownload=1)
- Stott, C., Adang, O., Livingstone, A., & Schreiber, M. (2007). Variability in the collective behaviour of England fans at Euro2004: “Hooliganism”, public order policing and social change. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 75-100.
- Stott, C., & Drury, J. (2000). Crowds, context and identity: Dynamic categorization processes in the “poll tax riot”. *Human Relations*, 53, 247-273.
- Stott, C., & Reicher, S. (1998a). Crowd action as inter-group process: Introducing the police perspective. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28, 509-529.
- Stott, C., & Reicher, S. (1998b). How conflict escalates: The inter-group dynamics of collective football crowd “violence”. *Sociology*, 32, 353-77.
- Sutton, R., & Douglas, K. (2013). *Social psychology*. London: Macmillan.
- Tajfel H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information* 13(2), 65-93.
- Tajfel, H. (1978). *Differentiation between social groups: studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations*. London: Academic Press.
- Tajfel H., & Turner J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-48). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Taine, H. (1876). *The origins of contemporary France: The Ancien Regime*. (Trans. J. Durand) New York: John F. Trow & Son.
- Templeton, A., Drury, J., Philippides, A. (2018). Walking together: Behavioural signatures of psychological crowds. *Royal Society Open Science* 5, 180172
- Thompson, E. P. (1971). The moral economy of the English crowd in the eighteenth century. *Past & Present*, 50, 76-136.

- Trotter, W. (1919). *Instincts of the herd in peace and war*. London: Ernest Benn.
- Turner, J. C. (1982). Towards a cognitive redefinition of the social group. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Social identity and intergroup relations* (pp. 15-40). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Turner, J. C. (1987). Introducing the problem: Individual and group. In J. C. Turner, M. A. Hogg, P. J. Oakes, S. D. Reicher, & M. S. Wetherell. *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory* (pp. 1-18). Oxford, UK: Blackwell
- Turner, R. H. (1964). Collective behavior. In R. E. L. Faris (Ed.), *Handbook of modern sociology* (pp. 382-425). Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Turner, R. H., & Killian, L. M. (1957). *Collective behavior*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Turner, R. H., & Killian, L. M. (1972). *Collective behavior*. (Second edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- van Ginneken, J. (1985). The 1895 debate on the origins of crowd psychology. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 21(4), 375-382.
- van Ginneken, J. (1992). *Crowds, psychology and politics 1871-1899*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- van Zomeren, M., Leach, C. W., & Spears, R. (2012). Protesters as “passionate economists” a dynamic dual pathway model of approach coping with collective disadvantage. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 16(2), 180-199.
- Vestergren, S., Drury, J., & Hammar Chiriack, E. (2018). How collective action produces psychological change and how that change endures over time: A case study of an environmental campaign. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 57(4), 855-877.  
DOI:10.1111/bjso.12270
- von Sivers, I., Templeton, A., Kunzner, F., Koster, G., Drury, J., Philippides, A., Neckel, T., & Bungartz, H.-J. (2016). Modelling social identification and helping in evacuation simulation. *Safety Science*, 89, 288–300. Doi:10.1016/j.ssci.2016.07.001

Waddington, D., & King, M. (2005). The disorderly crowd: From classical psychological reductionism to socio-contextual theory—the impact on public order policing strategies. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 44(5), 490-503.

Wetherell, M. (1987). Social identity and group polarization. In J. C. Turner, M. A. Hogg, P. J. Oakes, S. D. Reicher, & M. S. Wetherell. *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory* (pp. 142-170). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Zimbardo, P. G. (1970). The human choice: Individuation, reason and order versus de-individuation, impulse and chaos. In W. J. Arnold & D. Levine (Eds.), *Nebraska symposium on motivation 1969* (pp. 237-307). Lincoln: University of Nebraska.