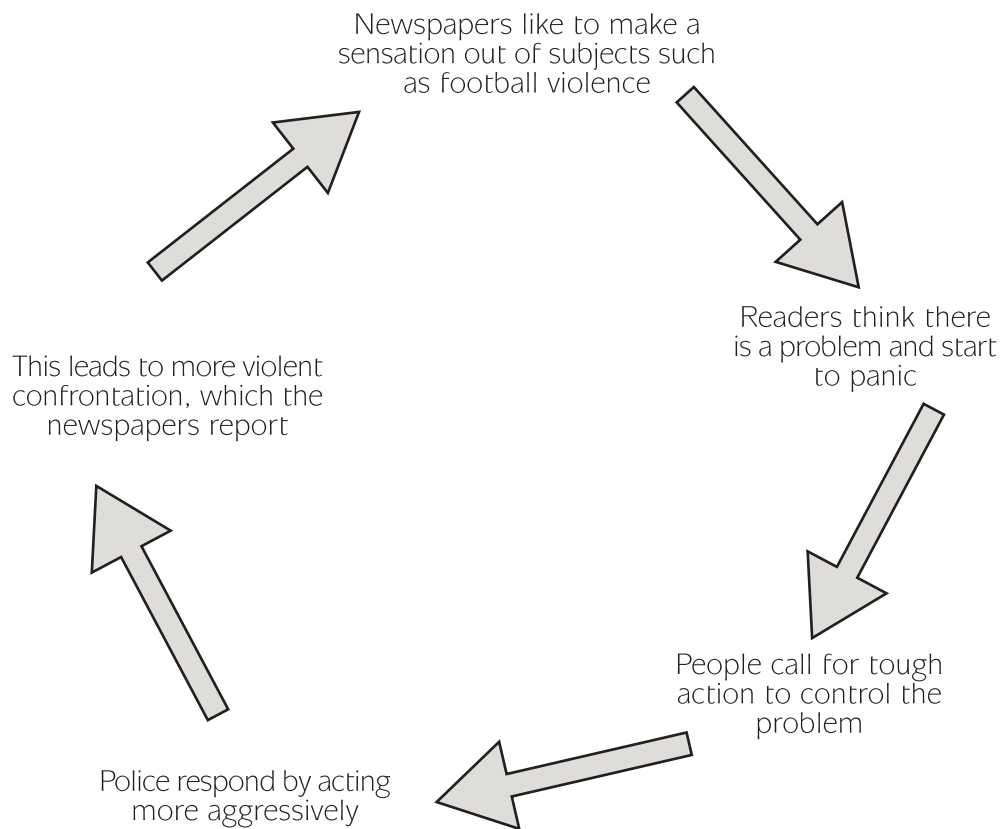


Core Activity Sheet 3.3

How the Media Amplifies the Problem of Football Violence

A famous sociologist, Stuart Hall, thinks that the way in which the media report football violence helps to make the problem worse. He calls this the Amplification Spiral (to amplify something is to enlarge it, to make it bigger, like the speakers in a hi-fi make the sound louder). Below is a diagram of the Amplification Spiral. Start at the top and follow it round to see how the media takes a small incident and reports it in a way which helps to increase violence.



Newspapers also help to create problems by 'predicting' that problems will happen, stirring up possible trouble-makers. In one example, a Chelsea fan appearing in court was charged with carrying a razor. In his defence he said he had 'read in a local newspaper that the West Ham lot were going to cause trouble'. Predictions like this also ensure that lots of journalists turn up, and they are much more likely to find any small story to report. This can be the beginning of the Amplification Spiral.

Do you think the Chelsea fan might have avoided trouble if the newspaper had not written what it did? Would you accept this as a good defence in court?