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Collective violence offenders and offending : the role of individual characteristics

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**Summary,
general
discussion and
conclusion**

Rationale and aim of the research project

This thesis aimed to assess whether differences between social identity and convergence explanations of collective violence can be bridged by focusing on psychological characteristics that play a key role in the processing of social information and that have been linked to the display of violent behavior. In this thesis, a typological approach (Moffitt, 1993, 1997) that distinguishes between different types of offenders served as a vantage point. This concluding chapter summarizes the main findings of the conducted studies, discusses the thesis' scope and limitations and reflects on its scientific progress, implications for practice and directions for future study

Summary of the main results

Variation within a group of collective violence offenders

The first study assessed the developmental pathways as measured by timing and frequency of offending leading up to becoming involved in collective violence for a sample of 438 individuals. Their involvement was established due to being arrested for partaking in collective violence incidents that occurred in 2011 or 2012 or due to being recorded in a database of 'known' hooligans maintained by the Dutch National Football Intelligence Point (Dutch: *Centraal Informatiepunt Voetbalvandalisme, CIV*) during that same period.

Individuals' criminal history up to their known involvement in collective violence was assessed by utilizing data from the Dutch police registration system HKS (Dutch: *Herkenningsdienstsysteem*). The distribution of registered offenses across individuals was heavily skewed: a small number of individuals were responsible for the majority of criminal records. Group-based modelling of the criminal career data (see Nagin, 2005) showed a minority of collective violence offenders ($n=57$, 13%) which started offending at an early age and had a high frequency of offending compared to other collective violence offenders in the sample. To further assess the patterns that emerged, the Dutch police registration system BVH (Dutch: *Basisvoorziening Handhaving*) was consulted to assess, over the past five years, incidents that did not result in arrest. The distribution of BVH-registered incidents was also heavily skewed. Particularly the minority identified by group-based modelling of HKS-data as early-starter high frequency offenders was more often involved in violent incidents in general and involved in more serious violent offenses in particular, both alone and collectively, than collective violence offenders following other developmental trajectories.

Taken together, this study indicates that there are important differences between collective violence offenders with regard to criminal career measures that are central to typological approaches. Findings therefore suggest that offender typologies may be useful in interpreting these pronounced differences and may help explain the contrasting results of prior empirical research on collective violence offenders' characteristics.

Individual determinants of persistence in collective violence

The second study explored whether behavioral and psychological characteristics were linked to an increased risk of recurrent collective violence involvement. To this end, criminal career and individual trait data

of the sample utilized in the first study were gathered. Criminal career data additional to those used in the first empirical study concerned offenses registered in the HKS over a 4- to 5-year period after collective violence involvement. Persistence was defined as collective violence recidivism within this follow-up period.

Prior empirical work (e.g. Lösel & Bliesener, 2003; Piquero et al., 2015) was utilized to identify potentially relevant behavioral and psychological characteristics. Individual characteristics data with regard to ADHD, ASPD, impulsivity, emotion-regulation deficits and sensation-seeking behavior were derived from three sources: the Dutch National Police (BVH records, $n=438$), the Dutch Probation Service (reports of a (shortened) recidivism risk assessment instrument, $n=113$) and the Netherlands Institute of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology (forensic psychological/psychiatric reports, $n=15$). In addition, problematic childhood behaviors at home and at school were assessed from these sources. Study results indicated that behavioral and psychological characteristics were linked to continued collective violence involvement. Individuals that persist in collective violence display significantly more problematic criminal career and individual trait measures. By applying Cox proportional hazard models (Cox, 1972) we found that particularly age at onset of offending, number of prior collective violence offenses and ADHD were associated with persistence in collective violence offending, with the latter more than doubling its risk.

Taken together, findings contradict a core assumption of the social identity perspective that offender characteristics are not linked to collective violence involvement. The skewness in the distribution of individual traits linked to persistence across trajectory groups and the finding that individual traits are predictors of persistence in collective violence however suggest that convergence theories do have some explanatory power, especially when it comes to early-starter high frequency collective violence offenders. Herewith the study results offer further support for a collective violence offender typology, which suggests that the relative contribution of individual and contextual determinants and their interaction differs between various types of collective violence offenders.

Mechanisms of reactive collective violence

The third study assessed the relative contribution of individual determinants, social processes and their interaction for reactive acts of collective violence. To this end, a case study of a 2012 Project X party that got out of hand was conducted. Data utilized to reconstruct the course of events consisted of 105 interviews, written documentation and open-source and police audio-visual material. Data of the 108 arrestees concerned criminal history and psychological traits and were gathered in the police registration systems HKS and BVH. Where possible, findings were compared to data concerning another riot in a party atmosphere, the Hoek van Holland beach riot that occurred in 2009 (see Muller et al., 2010).

The Project X riot originated from a public Facebook event opened by a then 15-year old girl inviting friends to celebrate her birthday. This event got hijacked and on the day of the event between some 3.000 to 5.000 individuals showed up in the vicinity of the girl's parental home. As a prevention measure, the police were already present. A gradual build-up occurred from

the moment of sundown, when about 700 youngsters advanced to the barriers behind which the police had taken position. When police reinforcements by means of riot police arrived, escalation occurred. At that moment, the police did not engage with the crowd and in our data no evidence surfaced for disproportionate or undifferentiated police action. Social identity seemed to have emerged spontaneously due to the party atmosphere among those involved: predominantly adolescent males without discernible criminal history or links to hooligan groups. Contextual factors (opportunity, risk) and alcohol consumption may have contributed to escalation. Nevertheless, the selection processes that occurred around the build-up (with changing dynamics for some being the reason to leave) and escalation (with less than 10 percent of those present partaking in actual violence) also indicated that individual determinants – particularly ADHD – may have contributed to participating in the collective violence that followed. These findings were in sharp contrast with collective violence at the Hoek van Holland beach riot in 2009. Around this event, deliberate mobilization of repeat offenders already affiliated with an upcoming violent hooligan group occurred with the specific goal of rioting in mind (Muller et al., 2010).

Taken together, the study shows that various types of collective violence offenders can be identified, between whom the relative contribution of contextual and individual factors may vary. Particularly for a small group of collective violence offenders characterized by persistent violent behavior problematic individual characteristics may have a significant contribution.

Mechanisms of proactive collective violence

The fourth study assessed the relative contribution of individual determinants, social processes and their interaction to proactive collective violence. To this end, mutually arranged confrontations between hooligan groups in the Netherlands – in which arrangements concern at least time and location of the confrontation and informal codes of legitimate action – were studied.

The study was based on qualitative data (police case files, questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with police officials) and quantitative data concerning the criminal history and behavioral and psychological characteristics of those partaking in mutually arranged confrontations. Quantitative data were compared to similar data of collective violence offenders who participated in a spontaneous confrontation between supporters around a football match. The data indicate that mutually arranged confrontations are organized in a secretive manner and are less likely to take place when the perceived risk of apprehension or severe injuries is deemed high. Instead of temporary norms as assumed in social identity theory, structural values characteristic of the hooligan culture – such as the importance of collective reputation and individual status – appeared contributing factors to the occurrence of and becoming involved in mutually arranged confrontations. Offender data indicated that the individuals involved in arranged confrontations were older than reactive collective violence offenders, were more likely to have a history of violent offending and had committed more violent offenses.

In sum, the findings of the study suggested that mutually arranged confrontations are not explicitly guided by trigger events and antagonistic

relationships between groups. Instead, these fights more often are driven by a subculture, which assigns value to behaving violently. Individual determinants (early onset, prior violent offenses) appeared to increase the likelihood of being part of this subculture. This again suggests that characteristics of those involved in collective violence are important for explaining why collective violence occurs and who becomes involved.

Discussion

This section discusses the data selection and methodological considerations of this thesis. It then elaborates on the challenges brought along by taking a typological vantage point. Finally, the thesis' findings and its theoretical contribution are addressed.

Data selection and restrictions

The first study of this thesis aimed to assess developmental pathways of collective violence offenders up to becoming involved in collective violence. The second study aimed to explore whether behavioral and psychological characteristics were linked to an increased risk of recurrent collective violence involvement. An important methodological challenge was to only include individuals who have actually participated in large-scale riots, which are the focus of the current thesis. Within the Dutch Penal Code, as long as the number of participants meets the legally required minimum of two, the actual number of people involved in a particular incident is not legally relevant for an incident to be regarded as collective violence. Incidents of collective violence as registered by the police hence cover a broad spectrum of barroom brawls in which as little as two individuals participate, up to large scale incidents of public disorder in which significant crowds of people participate.

To identify collective violence offenders, a hooligan database maintained by the Dutch police served as an important data source. This database was created to store data on the most prominent hooligans of each club playing professional soccer in the Netherlands. Being registered in this database is dependent on input of local police officers who have football and security in their remit and who are required to provide input for 'their' football team or teams (Ferwerda & Adang, 2007; Van Ham *et al.*, 2012). To minimize a potential bias towards known offenders, we also included suspects who were apprehended due to their involvement in recent collective violence incidents. Important with regard to the selected incidents was the comprehensive nature of the subsequent police investigations. This comprehensiveness was reflected by for example providing suspect photos to the media with the aim of identifying as many suspects as possible. Based on the number of individuals that had been involved in the selected incidents, police were confident that most perpetrators – including up to then unknown individuals – were arrested. As such, a potentially broad range of individuals, from already known individuals (e.g. hooligans) to one-time collective violence offenders, were identified. Furthermore, compared to previous empirical studies on the topic (e.g. Farrington, 2006; Lösel & Bliesener, 2003; Piquero *et al.*, 2015), the sample employed in the first and second study of this thesis is relatively large and less biased towards individuals (at risk of) persisting into (violent) offending. Nevertheless, the collective violence offenders

that were identified are by no means a statistically random reflection of all collective violence offenders in the Netherlands.

Furthermore, the current thesis considered both reactive and proactive types of collective violence. Around the time of the study, however, investigating mutually arranged confrontations between hooligan groups was no police priority. Consequently, there was no other option than to rely on the – to our knowledge – only two investigations into this matter that were conducted relatively recently. Though we do not have reasons to suppose they are not, we could not ascertain the extent to which findings are representative for all mutually arranged confrontations and the individuals involved in these fights. Compared to the only other empirical study into this matter (Kerr & De Kock, 2002), the current study was based on much more detailed information on the situation in which the mutually arranged confrontation came to be and more extensive data with regard to the individual characteristics of the individuals involved.

In sum, though the current thesis comprises a heterogeneous sample of both collective violence incidents and collective violence offenders, constructing a truly random sample of collective violence incidents and offenders was not possible. Findings, therefore, primarily relate to the samples included in this thesis. Consequently, caution is required when generalizing the current findings to other contexts in which collective violence occurs. Future studies employing other samples are necessary to substantiate the present results.

Methodological considerations

The current study is the first to link individual level criminal history data and psychological traits data to participation in collective violence. Criminal career histories were based on the individual's registered history. Being recorded in the police registration system, however, not only reflects individual behavior, but is also highly influenced by police priorities that make some criminal activities more prone to police interference and registration than others. Prior research for instance indicates that the strong decrease in registered juvenile offending may be linked to police practices (Van Ham *et al.*, 2015). Reliance on police data therefore, is likely to underestimate actual criminal behavior. Subsequently, this may have affected the prevalence of the trajectories identified with group-based modelling, as well as the assignment of individuals to these trajectories. Registered crime bias may also affect the level of persistence among collective violence offenders (as measured by recidivism in collective violence) found. Furthermore, obtaining validated data on the sampled individual's psychological characteristics relevant for the current study proved to be unfeasible since psychological testing of offenders involved in collective violence is uncommon. Therefore, the current study had to rely largely on derivative measures of psychological characteristics instead of diagnostics with clinical instruments. Although it was not tested here whether these derivative measures are indeed associated with social information processing, this may be deduced post-hoc from the study's findings. The current findings, for instance, are in line with that of prior empirical work with regard to a) the distribution of psychological characteristics among criminal trajectories and b) their association with persistence in violent behavior. That being said, future studies should strive

to use standardized psychological measures. In addition, the current thesis was limited to psychological characteristics which are, as ascertained by prior empirical work, associated with solo violence. Taking prior empirical work on solo violence as a vantage point, however, disregards the intergroup and intragroup dynamics that characterize collective violence. Individual characteristics, such as the sensitivity to peer pressure, for instance, may influence the felt need to conform to group norms and, therewith, also affect collective violence involvement. This suggests that psychological characteristics not taken into account in this thesis may be relevant in explaining collective violence as well.

The semi-parametric group-based trajectory modelling used to identify collective violence offenders with similar criminal patterns over time also has its limitations. Although group-based modelling is objective in that the groups found do not reflect random variation (Piquero, 2008), a limitation is that trajectory modelling always will identify a small number of latent classes and, as such, a priori assumes offender types in the data (Skardhamar, 2010). Furthermore, identified trajectories are an approximation. Criminal careers of individuals may fit best with the aggregated pattern of a particular group but may not follow the trajectory curve perfectly (see Nagin and Tremblay, 2005a, 2005b; Sampson & Laub, 2005). In order to avoid reification of trajectory groups, group membership should be linked to relevant risk- and protective factors to ascertain their theoretical relevance.

The relative contribution of individual and contextual determinants to collective violence was addressed by conducting qualitative studies into reactive and proactive acts of collective violence. To this end, various methodological approaches and data sources were utilized, including a detailed analysis of underlying case files (including interrogations and other evidence such as footage and confiscated chat conversations). Using police case files for scientific purposes, however, requires a certain level of restraint, since this information is primarily gathered for investigative purposes such as searching for the truth and creating a body of evidence to be used in court. In addition, unlike collective violence offenders involved in reactive acts of collective violence, those involved in mutually arranged confrontations were not forthcoming in answering police questions about their motivations and almost exclusively exercised their right to remain silent. Likely, this was not only because any statement made would contribute to the evidence against them, but also reflected the informal code within hooligan subculture that states that the police are not to be talked with. Consequently, second-hand sources of information such as survey data and semi-structured interviews with police professionals working in football and security had to be relied on specifically with regard to the cases of proactive collective violence studied. Part of the police professionals consulted had acquired the trust of individuals who partake in these mutually arranged confrontations. Furthermore, police officers working covertly were consulted. These police officers are able to obtain information from informants who are part of the hooligan groups involved in such fights. Although bias with regard to motivational aspects is in play for the individuals participating in mutually arranged confrontations cannot be completely ruled out, the information obtained from these police officers clearly contributes to identifying the relevant mechanisms giving cause to this type of collective violence.

Despite the limitations set out above, by employing a wide variety of sources and several methodological approaches, the data gathered for the current study allowed for a comprehensive exploration of whether social identity and convergence perspectives on collective violence could be fruitfully reconciled.

Theoretical notions and scientific progress

Collective violence research encompasses opposing theoretical views, with one view stressing the relevance of context and the other underscoring the importance of individual traits. Over the past decades the context in which collective violence occurred has become the all but sole research focus. Core assumptions of social identity explanations of collective violence are that collective violence is preceded by trigger events, that antagonistic relations are present among the groups involved and that offender characteristics do not, in any way, guide an individual's decision to partake (Reicher & Stott, 2011; Reicher, 2001; Waddington, 2012). Furthermore, by arguing that no individual attributes are known of that reliably predict riot participation (Reicher, 2001), social identity explanations do not take into account individual characteristics of collective violence offenders. In the theoretical debate on collective violence, the intersection of contextual and convergence explanations for collective violence has remained mainly untouched. This thesis aimed to provide directions for uniting opposing theoretical views on collective violence and furthering the debate on its determinants by combining quantitative and qualitative data and methods.

The social identity perspective acknowledges individual differences between collective violence offenders to the extent that they may identify different social categories in a given situation, in the contents of these categories and in the persons prototypical thereof (Herrera & Reicher, 1998; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, b; Reicher & Sani, 1998; Sani & Reicher, 1998, 1999). Differences in individual characteristics of collective violence offenders are, however, rejected as a matter of principle. The first question this thesis sought to address was whether developmental pathways in delinquency and crime differ across individuals up to the moment they become involved in collective violence. Indeed the age of onset at and frequency of offending was found to differ substantially between collective violence offenders. These pronounced differences within the sample with regard to criminal career measures fit existing ideas on criminal careers and extant typological theories on crime causation. This thesis therewith, as a first, offers an indication that different types of collective violence offenders may be identified based on their criminal career characteristics.

The second question central to this thesis was whether there are individual characteristics that are linked to persistence in collective violence and, if so, which ones. The results presented in this thesis indicate that there are indeed individual characteristics that contribute to persistence in collective violence, as measured by recidivism. Not only criminal career measures but also ADHD was found to significantly contribute to a heightened chance of having been registered for repeated involvement in collective violence. Furthermore, confirming the results of the first study, individual characteristics associated with the processing of and reacting to social cues (ADHD, ASPD heightened impulsivity, emotion-regulation

deficits, sensation-seeking behavior) were found significantly more often in early-starter high frequency collective violence offenders compared to collective violence offenders who followed different developmental trajectories. These findings substantiate prior empirical work, which has implicated these individual characteristics in contributing to intergroup conflict and offensive action tendencies in crowds (Levy et al., 2017; Mackie et al., 2000; Russell, 2004; Yzerbyt et al., 2003). In addition, the distribution of these individual characteristics among the different developmental trajectories distinguished in the sample of collective violence offenders offers further support for a typological vantage point to bridge differences between contextual and convergence explanations for collective violence.

Collective violence not only occurs reactively in response to trigger events, but may also be preplanned without necessarily being preceded by trigger events or requiring antagonistic relations between the sides involved (also see Adang, 2011). The third question this thesis aimed to address, was whether the contribution of contextual and individual determinants differs between these different types of collective violence and, if so, how. The data presented in this thesis indicate that the distinction between reactive and proactive violence is not straightforward. Particularly the Hoek van Holland beach riot (Muller et al., 2010) – which was used as a comparison case in the Project-X case study – showed that a small group of individuals belonging to an upcoming but already notorious hooligan group were already in advance intent on instigating public disorder; the majority of those participating responded to how events subsequently unfolded. This indicates that contributing factors may differ between individuals who participate in collective violence, and that various types of collective violence offenders may be involved in a single incident. Consequently, the relative contribution of contextual and individual determinants then appears to vary between incidents and between the individuals who involve themselves.

The data gathered in this thesis, furthermore, suggest that particularly persistent offenders involve themselves in both reactive and proactive acts of collective violence. The most prominent contributing factors seem to be a violent criminal history, individual characteristics associated with the processing of social information and the subculture of which this group of perpetrators are part. As a result, the individuals who may be characterized as persistent collective violence offenders appear to have a low threshold for using violence, both alone and in a group, confirming prior empirical work (Piquero et al., 2015; Lösel & Bliesener, 2003). In addition to negative emotions such as revenge, current results are in line with prior studies, which suggest that there are individuals who may experience positive affect (such as joy or the gaining of status among their peers) when acting violently (Adang, 2011; Spaaij, 2008). Taken together, this argues for an approach incorporating both reactive and proactive collective violence and the inclusion of both negative and positive affect when considering the relative contribution of contextual and individual determinants of collective violence. Theoretically, this fits the recently introduced quadripartite violence typology (QVT) used to explain why individuals may behave violently (see Howard, 2015). This typology may complement currently dominant contextual approaches on collective violence stressing trigger events and the emergence of social identity.

Theoretical implications

The initiation-escalation model (Adang, 2011) describes that collective violence may initiate in response to trigger events or with individuals and groups actively seeking out opportunities for confrontation. Furthermore, Adang (2011) identifies two mechanisms for the escalation of violence (in the sense that more individuals decide to involve themselves). Next to opportunity and (perceived) risk of retaliation, Adang (2011) identifies an 'us versus them' relationship as an important escalation mechanism, with a higher frequency of violence observed when relationships between groups are more antagonistic. The initiation-escalation model thus differentiates between collective violence type (spontaneous and premeditated) and its significance for those involved (negative affect/positive affect). Herewith, this model largely parallels the recently introduced quadripartite violence typology (QVT).

To explain violent behavior, the QVT distinguishes between the type of violence (impulsive or controlled) and the feelings the individual(s) involved associate with behaving violently (appetitively or aversively) (Howard, 2015). The QVT has identified four incentives for violent behavior: a desire for excitement and exhilaration is central to appetitive/impulsive violence, whereas in the case of appetitive/controlled violence self-gratification – either in material goods or social dominance – is the key incentive. Self-protection against an interpersonal threat (whether physical or psychological) is considered to underlie aversive/impulsive violence, whereas vengeance or retribution is the incentive for aversive/controlled violence.

At least three arguments can be brought forward for the relevance of the QVT to explain collective violence. First, the point of view that main reasons for partaking in a collective violence event may vary between individuals is acknowledged by our Project-X case study. This study, for instance, indicated that many arrestees had – according to their own statement – acted violently in response to unnecessary and disproportionate police actions. Be it to a much lesser extent, others, however, referred primarily to sensation- and thrill-seeking to explain their own behavior. Second, aversive violence and its core underlying incentives of self-protection and vengeance are reflected in the thesis' finding that a significant part of collective violence offenders only engage in violence under specific conditions. This, for instance, may be in case of trigger events and the resultant emerging relationships between the groups present. Third, appetitive violence and its core underlying incentives of excitement and self-gratification are reflected in the significance of spontaneous and premeditated acts of collective violence, such as planned fights, particularly for individuals who belong to a hooligan subculture that glorifies behaving violently.

This thesis' findings have provided evidence that psychological characteristics may underlie the incentive(s) of engaging in violence as identified by the QVT. For instance, psychological characteristics contribute to persistence in collective violence, indicating that these characteristics may affect trigger event and intergroup relationships perception. Furthermore, these characteristics were particularly present in early-onset high frequency offenders, who appear to derive intrinsic (excitement) and/or extrinsic value (social dominance) from behaving violently. Taking into account the results of prior empirical work, this indicates that explaining why collective violence occurs and who becomes involved, requires analysis

on various levels. In order of aggregation level, the first level of analysis is that of context such as trigger events and intergroup relations, on which the SIM focuses. The second level of analysis is that of intragroup relations, which focuses on intragroup dynamics, norms and expectations (e.g. role models, synchronizing behaviors). The third level of analysis is that individual characteristics that are associated with behaving violently, such as heightened impulsivity, sensation-seeking behavior and a hostility bias. As individual characteristics influence perception of intra- and intergroup relations, individual characteristics interrelate with the other two levels of analysis. Future studies may make clear how these levels of analysis interrelate and both its theoretical and practical implications.

Implications for practice

Results presented in this thesis indicate that particularly early-onset high frequency collective violence offenders show psychological characteristics associated with violent behavior. In addition, data presented in this thesis indicate that criminal history and psychological characteristics are linked to persistence in collective violence offending. Furthermore, the results of this thesis indicate that those involved in proactive collective violence incidents have a more criminal and violent history than most individuals who partake in reactive collective violence. These findings combined suggest that distinguishing between various types of collective violence offenders for whom the root causes of partaking in collective violence are likely to vary – as well as taking into account the varying nature of collective violence – may help extend our understanding of why collective violence occurs.

The Netherlands has had a common national football policy since 1997. While initially, this policy focused upon formulating a joint approach by professional football clubs, the police, municipalities and the Public Prosecution Service, later on, emphasis shifted to normalization. Normalization adheres to confronting supporters who visit a football match with as few restrictions as possible. To further develop accessibility, hospitality and safety around football, various spearheads have recently been drawn up. Next to increasing supporter involvement in football safety policy and providing municipalities – as the authority for maintaining public order – leverage points to deal with football safety, a person-oriented approach is considered a priority. This originates from the point of view that, as long as so-called ‘notorious troublemakers’ are present around football matches, accessibility and hospitality for other supporters remain limited. Criteria that are considered to be at the core of taking on a successful person-oriented approach are: a) the presence of a comprehensive approach to problem supporters consisting of appropriate punishment as well as preventing recidivism, b) communication of intended measures and penalties by all partners involved (club, municipality, police and the Public Prosecution Service), c) sufficient intelligence gathering about hard core hooligans and d) operational follow-up on this intelligence. Taken these criteria in mind, it may be concluded that the person-oriented approach aims for a nationally consistent approach to notorious troublemakers while at the same time warranting customization for each individual (Auditteam Football & Safety, 2019).

The thesis' findings that psychological characteristics affect persistence in collective violence have various implications for practice. With regard to the sufficient intelligence gathering about hard core hooligans, this thesis has made clear that, for the time being, it is a major challenge to collect data on the individual characteristics of collective violence offenders. This is partly due to the fact that the police and partners – such as the Public Prosecution Service and the Probation Service – pay limited attention to individual characteristics when individuals are arrested due to becoming involved in collective violence. Besides psychological assessment being costly and time consuming, this seems based on the prejudice that group dynamics are the main determinant of becoming involved in collective violence. The thesis findings, however, imply that more often than currently is the case psychological reports and risk assessments of individuals arrested for their involvement in collective violence will need to be written and conducted, for instance by the Probation Service or the Netherlands Institute of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology (Dutch: *Nederlands Instituut voor Forensische Psychiatrie en Psychologie*, *NIFP*). This way, a better picture may be obtained of underlying explanations of an individual's involvement in collective violence, recidivism risk and the required measures to prevent recidivism i.e. appropriate punishment and operational follow-up.

Also, with regard to the sufficient intelligence gathering about hard core hooligans, identifying individuals for whom a person-oriented approach may contribute to football safety may be considered a key challenge. Currently, a database of those frequently involved in hooliganism is maintained by the Dutch National Football Intelligence Unit (CIV in Dutch). This national database is filled with individuals whose names – usually limited to a maximum of 10 – are provided bottom-up by local police officers who are required to utilize the 'Focus on Hooligans' (Dutch: *Hooligans in Beeld*) method. In short, this method aims to monitor and control individuals whose behaviour on match days is considered problematic by local police officers and who commit offences at other times and locations as well (Spaaij, 2013). The findings of this thesis suggest that in this way – by requiring and maximizing local input – individuals are regarded as a notorious troublemaker while differing markedly from one another on key characteristics. For instance, there were 228 persons in this study who belonged to the CIV database, but only 57 persons appeared to have the highest risk of persisting into collective violence. This thesis findings, therefore, argue for a top-down approach to identifying notorious troublemakers as well. This top-down approach may utilize inclusion and exclusion criteria by means of the current thesis findings and, therewith, contribute to an intelligence-based police strategy that also considers characteristics of collective violence offenders.

A subsequent intelligence-based police strategy may be aimed at preventing notorious troublemakers' presence in crowds. This working method goes beyond the main dilemma of public order policing, namely controlling crowd members with violent intent without alienating crowd members whose aims are legitimate (Reicher et al., 2004). Instead of taking action specifically towards individuals who have frequently behaved violently in crowds, the current results argue as well for preventive action taken towards persons who, based on their criminal history and individual characteristics, are at high risk of repeatedly displaying violent behavior

in crowds. The data presented in this thesis indicate that particular for individuals who suffer from psychological and psychiatric problems associated with social information processing measures such as stadium bans or obligations to report at a police station at a given time or place should be considered, despite the current absence of a comprehensive track record with regard to collective violence offending. Without paying attention to these individual's underlying problems and needs, there will be no incentive for them to change their behavior. Although limiting their freedom around football matches may be suitable to reduce the risk of collective violence from occurring, behavioral interventions would need to be imposed to further reduce recidivism.

The results of the thesis suggest that different types of collective violence offenders can be identified for whom the root causes of becoming involved in collective violence differ. Paralleling the relative small number of early-starter high frequency collective violence offenders found in the conducted studies, prior research indicates that often only a small minority of the individuals present may be intent on instigating violence (Adang, 2011; Reicher et al., 2004). The thesis' results indicate that for a minority of collective violence offenders behavior is driven by individual rather than contextual factors. Their behavior, however, may in turn be a contextual factor contributing to the involvement of other groups in the crowd. Taking preventive actions towards this minority of persistent collective violence offenders, then, may prevent violent behavior in crowds both directly and indirectly. However, the reality of collective violence is complicated by the notion that groups intent on instigating collective violence are not automatically a role model for other groups in the crowd. The chances that individuals with violent intent become role models for other groups in the crowd without such an intent particularly has been linked to the response of the police (Reicher, 1984; Stott et al., 2001). Therefore, a major emphasis is to be placed on supporting and facilitating crowd members pursuing legal goals and activities, even under conditions where one is aware of the presence of groups with illegal goals and even at points where these groups start to act in illegal or violent ways (Reicher et al., 2004). A better insight in which people and groups – i.e. social identities – are present in a crowd may help the police to develop strategies to act in an appropriate and targeted manner, therewith preventing that behaviors of the violent-intent minority contribute to escalation of collective violence in crowds.

In addition to finding support for taking a typological vantage point when explaining collective violence, this thesis differentiated between various types of collective violence: trigger-related and preplanned. Preplanned acts of collective violence particularly concern mutually arranged confrontations between hooligan groups. Such fights are, in the Netherlands and in other European countries, prosecutable under criminal law. Mutually arranged confrontations have been taking place now for several years, indicating the structural character of such fights in the Netherlands. The increasing number of mutually arranged confrontations may be traced back to improvement in stadia management and increased risks of apprehension, which limit opportunities to behave violently around football matches and at stadium grounds (Cleland & Cashmore, 2016; Jewell, Simmons & Szymanski, 2014). This suggests that the police should focus on increasing the perceived

risk of apprehension among potential participants as to ensure that mutually arranged confrontations do not materialize. In addition, the findings presented in this thesis indicate that such fights are participated in by only a small part of 'known' hooligans who have an extensive history of violence, both solo and alone. This suggests that priority should be given to identifying people involved in these fights. Bringing together various information flows (e.g. police registration data, police professionals working covertly) and implementing new technology – such as artificial intelligence to analyze footage of fights – may provide insight into the persons which are involved in mutually arranged confrontations. Writing and conducting psychological reports and risk assessments of individuals arrested for their involvement in such fights, may help in identifying risk factors – both individual and contextual – that increase the risk of partaking in these fights. Information from such reports and assessments subsequently can be used to draw up a person-oriented approach (Dutch: *Persoonsgerichte Aanpak*, PGA), which may focus on raising barriers for these individuals' future participation in these fights. In addition, decreasing the number of individuals willing or able to participate in mutually arranged confrontations, may increase the efforts necessary to organize these fights and as such contribute to their preclusion.

Future research directions

The findings of this thesis are an inducement for several future research directions. This thesis suggests that the relative contribution of individual and contextual determinants to collective violence differs between individuals. This thesis' findings have substantiated that to explain collective violence, three levels of analysis (intergroup relations, intragroup dynamics and individual characteristics) can be distinguished. Although this thesis is limited to collective violence in settings generally considered as issue-irrelevant (Wann et al., 2001), this suggests that to explain collective violence around protests and demonstrations – issue-relevant collective violence – these levels of analysis also need to be accounted for. The motives underlying issue-relevant collective violence, however, may deviate from issue-irrelevant collective violence (less hedonistic and more ideologically driven). Consequently, future studies may assess individual characteristics of collective violence offenders involved particularly in issue-relevant collective violence, their association with persistence in this type of collective violence and the interaction of individual characteristics at the intra- and intergroup level. Conducting such studies may not only provide data that are currently lacking, but may also offer further substantiation for the theoretical implications that may be derived from the findings of this thesis.

The findings in this thesis are supportive of a hybrid perspective on collective violence in which intergroup relationships, intergroup dynamics, opportunity and individual determinants all contribute. Particularly, results indicate that individuals who come to participate in collective violence are not a homogeneous group. Up to now, it has not been adequately assessed whether and, if so, to what extent and through which mechanisms small groups of individuals known for their frequent and repeated involvement in collective violence may be able to affect intergroup relationships and intergroup dynamics in collective settings.

Also, the results of the conducted studies suggest that psychological characteristics linked to the processing of social information increase the risk of more frequent involvement in collective violence. Up to now, collective violence researchers seem to prefer a reconstruction of events based on observations, in-depth interviews and case file studies. These studies result in detailed reports of the context in which collective violence occurs, although to some extent trigger events and motives identified in these studies may resemble theoretical assumptions more than that they reflect objective data (Waddington, 2012). The emphasis in this thesis has been mainly on providing evidence that psychological characteristics associated with solo violence may serve as a predictor of collective violence involvement for, at least, a subgroup of collective violence offenders. As a result, the social component of collective violence and the interaction between the individual and social component has not been explicitly studied in this thesis. Incorporating behavioral and psychological determinants linked to social information processing identified in this thesis – which up to now have been disregarded – may provide additional knowledge on who becomes involved in collective violence and why. Noteworthy in this regard is that the processing of social information may also be affected temporarily. For instance, the findings derived from the Project-X case study indicate that a considerable part of the arrestees blamed their involvement on being under the influence of alcohol. The use of alcohol has been found to heighten impulsive behavior, to alter perceptions of opportunity and to decrease sensitivity to social cues (Van Hasselt, 2013). Furthermore, future research may also assess whether, and if so, which psychological characteristics affect intragroup dynamics and make individuals – regardless of context – more susceptible to joining a violent crowd or to conform to group norms.

Furthermore, internet in general and social media in particular have become indispensable in social life. Social media played a prominent role in one of the case studies; a crowd was mobilized via Facebook. At the same time, it is important to realize that an extensive reconstruction of this incident showed that the simple fact that many young people were on their feet cannot be identified as the leading contextual cause. Since then, in the Netherlands no more incidents have occurred in which social media were primarily the means by which crowds were mobilized and events subsequently resulted in collective violence. In relation to mutually arranged confrontations, however, social media do seem to play an important role. The contact between hooligan groups by social media is easy and quick to realize and (relatively) safe with regard to chances of apprehension; moreover, social media offer an outlet to hooligan groups to be able to distribute footage of mutually arranged confrontations that materialize quickly and with a large reach. The dynamics of social media on proactive collective violence therefore appear of interest for future research. Not only for identifying individuals who participate in these fights, but potentially also to predict when and where these fights will occur. However, to be able to arrive at reliable predictions about future fights, accuracy and completeness of social media and other open source data (e.g. hooligan sides involved, location, date, time) would need to be assessed.

Conclusion

The current thesis has brought together opposing views on the causes of collective violence. To this end, various data sources and scientific disciplines were considered. The thesis finds that different types of collective violence offenders can be identified, who differ qualitatively with regard to criminal history, individual traits, and their likelihood of persistence in collective violence. Furthermore, it finds reasons for differentiating spontaneous from pre-planned instances of collective violence. Whereas contextual factors appear most salient for individuals engaging in spontaneous collective violence, individual traits seem to govern a subsample of persistent collective violence offenders engaging in both spontaneous and pre-planned collective violence incidents. Whereas persistent collective violence offenders constitute only a small part of all individuals engaging in spontaneous collective violence, their presence is more outspoken among those engaging in pre-planned collective violence.

