The 2011 England riots in European context: a framework for understanding the 'life-cycle' of riots

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The 2011 England Riots in European context: A framework for understanding the 'life-cycle' of riots

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This paper examines the 2011 England riots and seeks to place them in their recent comparative context. Briefly, it sets out a 'life-cycle' model for (historical and comparative) analysis, and then uses this as the basis for contrasting the English experience with the rioting witnessed in other European countries in recent times – in particular the riots in France in 2005 and in Sweden in 2013. Using a range of sources, the analysis identifies a number of similarities and differences between the aetiology, nature and aftermath of the riots in the different countries, and argues that this illustrates both the potential of comparative analysis and the importance of moving beyond an examination of their aetiology, to study riots 'in the round'.

Understanding and analysing riots

In what follows my aim is to place the 2011 English riots in an historical and, most importantly, a comparative context. To do so I set out an analytical model that can be used for comparative study but which, equally, can also form the basis for any broad analysis of riots. The paper then examines, briefly, the 2011 England riots, before moving on to a comparison with the French rioting of 2005 and the riots in Sweden in 2013. In doing so it is not my intention to make particular claims on behalf of this particular comparison rather, following similar arguments about comparative analysis of policy-making (Tonry, 2015), I want to make the case for the importance of comparative analysis in this field and, in parallel, in doing so seek to illustrate elements of the utility of the model that I propose.

The model outlined here, which extends earlier work (Newburn, 2015a), was initially stimulated by, and in turn seeks to extend, the influential 'flashpoints' model developed by David Waddington and colleagues (see for example Waddington et al, 1989; King and Waddington, 2006). My model, however, departs in a number ways from extant approaches to the analysis of riots. First and foremost, where the bulk of previous scholarship has tended to focus on the antecedents or aetiology of riots, this model focuses on what might be thought of as their 'life-cycle'. That is to say, whilst like extant work it seeks to understand how riots come to happen – what are the major contextual and contingent factors that might help us explain them – it also

seeks to move beyond such concerns to focus both on how riots unfold and what follows in their wake. The model recognises that not only do riots differ in what might crudely be thought of as their 'causes', but also in the ways they unfold and spread, in the types and numbers of people involved, their motivations and rationalisations, the ways in which riots are policed, managed and otherwise responded to, and in terms of their aftermath. Now it is not my contention that such features are entirely absent from earlier work, far from it. Rather, it is that the tendency has been to place less emphasis on such matters in formal analytical models, to focus more on the lead-up to disorder, and less on its unfolding characteristics – how it changes over time and by location, and more specifically to tend to ignore or underplay what occurs in the aftermath.

The second major extension proposed in this 'life-cycle' model is therefore a consequence of including the aftermath of riots in the analysis. Where most extant work on riots, including work based on the flashpoints model, has focused primarily on their aetiology, and then secondarily on their unfolding characteristics, a fully-realized understanding of riots, in my view, also requires that we consider their aftermath and, in particular, that attention be focused on the response of the state to significant civil disorder. As Gadd (2015: 1031) observes in a different but cognate context: 'Perhaps what matters more than the question of 'why they did it', however, is how violence was responded to in its aftermath, since this can determine how it is defined and whether it continues, retribution follows, as well as whether some form of justice is attained.' This therefore forms an important part of the analytical model, requiring us to think not only about those economic, social, political and institutional features of the landscape that conduce toward rioting but, equally, to think about how agents, agencies and institutions operate once the violence has ceased and what the implications of such social reaction might be.

In Table 1 below I set out four major sets of features that I argue can be used to frame the analysis of riots, including both historical and comparative analysis. The first set of features is what one might think of as the 'context' within which disorder occurs. This incorporates, and is similar in many respects to, the first three of Waddington's flashpoints model's levels: the structural, the political/ideological, and the cultural. Similarly, it would also incorporate, though it also extends considerably beyond, what Body-Gendrot and Savitch (2012) refer to as 'mobilization potential' – the relationships and attitudes that facilitate or inhibit collective violence. The second set of features relate to the dynamic features of disorder and, more particularly, focus on the way in which disorder appears to start, subsequently matures or spreads, both geographically and temporally, and how long it lasts. It also incorporates some understanding of the factors that appear to bring the disorder to an end. Third, 'nature', focuses on issues of participation and motivation - who and

how many people are involved in the rioting and the reasons and rationales for their participation – the ways in which the disorder is policed and, finally, what forms the disorder takes, such as attacks on police, on property, looting and so on.

Finally, and as suggested earlier, in perhaps the most significant departure from other models that analyse rioting, the fourth set of features focuses largely on the aftermath. My argument here is that any full understanding of riots must necessarily incorporate some analysis of what happens once the violence has ceased (though accepting that many of these features whilst extending beyond the rioting, may begin in the midst of the violence). Here again I identity three broad sets of responses. The first is the political, the public and the media responses. How are riots framed? How are they talked about, defined, defended and attacked by politicians, pundits and public? Such matters deeply affect popular understandings of riots and are matters that vary considerably by time and place or, if one prefers, historically and comparatively. In this regard, however, it is important to recognise that reactions to rioting – what politicians, journalists and others have to say – often continue long beyond the period of rioting itself, and work to establish understandings of the events.

Second is the response of the penal state, by which I mean both penal elites - the essence of Garland's (2013) narrower use of the term 'penal state' – as well as the penal system itself. How are the courts and systems of punishment mobilised? Who and how many people become caught up in the penal system, and with what consequence? Such matters have much to tell us both about the rioting itself – and how it is understood socially and politically – but, arguably, potentially also have something interesting to say about the wider social context in which rioting, and the reaction to rioting, occurs. The final element under 'response' is the public policy reaction to rioting: from decisions to appoint official inquiries (or not) through to economic, political and cultural policy responses relating to the communities affected, or to social, religious or ethnic groups involved. Again, such responses arguably contain lessons both for our understanding of the society within which such disorder occurs as well as forming an important element any fully-fledged understanding of the 'life-cycle' of riots.

Table 1 about here

The English riots in their recent comparative context
I now want to turn my attention to the comparison of the 2011 England riots with those in France in 2005 and Sweden in 2013. I selected these straightforwardly as

two of the most significant examples of rioting in Europe in the past decade. Their selection is not intended to suggest they be seen as exemplary in any respect, and I accept both that other examples might have served just as well and, indeed, might have led to different conclusions. The point here is simply to illustrate the possibility and utility of comparative analysis in this regard (Tonry, 2015).

Although the Home Secretary cautioned against drawing too direct a link, all major sources are agreed that the initial 'trigger' for the riots was the fatal shooting of a young mixed-race man, Mark Duggan, in north London on Thursday 4th August 2011 (see for example: HAC, 2011; Metropolitan Police Service, 2012; Riots, Communities and Victims Panel, 2012). Two days later, family, friends and others marched on the local police station in Tottenham to protest about the shooting and the claims that were made about Duggan in the aftermath. These claims included that Duggan had been armed and had fired at police officers (in fact the firearm was found approximately four and a half metres from Duggan's body and had not been fired), and that a police officer had been hit by a bullet fired by Duggan (in fact the bullet which lodged in an officer's radio came from a police firearm). That the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) appeared to be the source of some of these claims further stoked the fires (IPCC, 2012).

Tempers were further inflamed both by the very poor communication between the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in London and Mark Duggan's family, and by the subsequent mishandling of the Saturday evening protest. In particular, the perceived failure of the MPS to put forward an officer of sufficient seniority to signal that they were taking the protest seriously upset many outside the police station, and what appeared to some present to be the rough handling of one young female protestor by the police also contributed to the deteriorating mood. By early evening two police vehicles had been set on fire and, with the police service seemingly reticent to intervene, the disorder spiralled, with serious outbreaks occurring in Tottenham and nearby Wood Green, resulting in over 400 criminal offences being recorded, over 200 arrests and the eventual deployment of 3,500 police officers (MPS, 2012).

Over the next three days the rioting spread, initially across London, and subsequently to other cities including Birmingham, Manchester, Salford and Liverpool among others. In all, five people lost their lives during the riots, an estimated 15,000 people were involved in the disorder, over 4,000 arrests were made, and approximately 1,300 people received custodial sentences averaging 17 months each (Ministry of Justice, 2012). British insurers expected to pay out something in the region of £200 million as a consequence (ABI, 2013). The English riots of 2011 could consequently lay claim to being the biggest civil disorder in a generation (Newburn, 2015a).

The 2005 riots in France began in the Parisian neighbourhood of Clichy-sous-Bois where a group of teenagers, who were returning home from playing football and had no identification papers on them, ran from a police patrol when they were asked to stop. Three of the boys climbed a fence and took refuge in an electricity sub-station. Like many Parisian teenagers of African origin, they were afraid of the police and were particularly concerned about the consequences of being taken into custody. Their choice of hiding place was predictably disastrous, and when one touched the transformer all three were electrocuted. Only one survived. The two deaths occurred at a time when tensions between the police and the residents of Clichy-sous-Bois, and other Parisian banlieues, were already very high. The eventual outcome was some of the most severe rioting in living memory – described in American media as 'civil war in France' (Jobard, 2008) - affecting not just Paris but over 200 towns elsewhere. In excess of 10,000 cars were burned, hundreds of buildings severely damaged, over €200m worth of damage caused, more than 3,000 people arrested, and a state of emergency declared by President Chirac.

The spark for the rioting in Stockholm occurred on the evening of Sunday 19 May 2013. Police had been called to the suburb of Husby, about 20 minutes from the city centre, where it was reported that a local man was brandishing a machete and was threatening people. In the course of the police operation that followed the 69-year old man was shot dead by the police. As so often occurs on such occasions a variety of stories then started to circulate about what had happened. The initial police report after the shooting claimed that the man had been holding a hostage inside his apartment. In fact it was his wife and there was no evidence that she was either being threatened or being held hostage. Equally, the 'machete' subsequently turned out to be a common-or-garden knife. Protests both over the nature of the police operation and the misinformation that was spread in the aftermath led to protests during the course of the following week. Initially organised by a community activist group, Megafonen, a peaceful demonstration outside a police station was planned for the Wednesday. As a spokesperson for Megafonen explained, they had two specific demands. "First of all we wanted an apology for the family of the man who was killed and an apology to the community of Husby for the militarisation of the area which was totally unnecessary. Secondly, we don't believe that the police and authorities should investigate itself."[1]

Rioting broke out the following weekend, with groups of youths in Husby setting fire to cars and attacking the police. On the first evening, though estimates varied widely, journalistic accounts suggested that upwards of 100 youths were involved

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[1] Unless otherwise stated all quotes relating to Stockholm are taken from research interviews. I am grateful to Sorcha Pollak for undertaking this work.

(see, for example, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/may/25/sweden-europe-news). There was a similar though slightly larger outbreak of disorder in Husby the following day with rioting also spreading to other parts of Stockholm. On the Tuesday evening the rioting spread further in Stockholm with the bulk of the violence still being directed toward the police and toward vehicles, although one shopping centre was attacked. Although by the Thursday Stockholm was relatively calm, disorder had begun to occur in other cities including Örebro. At the end of five days of riots it was estimated that approximately 200 vehicles had been set on fire (Hörnqvist, this volume), with the total damage being over 60m Swedish kronor (over €10m).

Even from these very brief descriptions it is clear that there are some similarities and obvious differences between what unfolded in France, England and Sweden. In terms of an immediate spark or flashpoint, all three were preceded by the deaths of citizens as a consequence of police activity. In both London and Stockholm this involved what was perceived to be excessive or illegitimate use of force by the police. In Paris, the deaths of the two young boys were viewed as the consequence of police actions, even if in this instance it was at one remove. This pattern is very much typical of rioting, with literature from across the world offering examples of police action being a typical trigger for collective violence (King and Waddington, 2006; Body-Gendrot, 2013; Fassin, 2013). In all three cases, the period in between the deaths and the outbreak of disorder involved what initially were peaceful demonstrations, protestors focusing not only police use of force but also what they perceived to be the spread of false information by the authorities. In terms of obvious contrast it is clear that the three sets of riots occurred on very different scales. The rioting in France affected hundreds of locations over a period of several weeks. The English riots, though on a very significant scale, did not spread nearly as far as those in France, and both the English and Swedish riots were over far quicker than those in France. The rioting in Sweden was on a much smaller scale than both other examples and barely spread beyond the capital city of Stockholm. A more systematic analysis of the three cases can be undertaken by applying the model outlined earlier. Given the level of detail potentially captured by the model it is only possible in the limited space here to focus on the key similarities and differences under the four general features of the model: context, dynamics, nature and response.

Context

That riots generally occur within, and draw people from, some of the poorest urban communities, is well established. To a significant extent the disorder in France, England and Sweden was no exception. The rioting in France in 2005 broke out

initially in Clichy-sous-Bois, which is the poorest locality in Seine-Saint-Denis, the department with the highest unemployment rate in France (Body-Gendrot and Savitch, 2012). The rioting spread to approximately 300 locations, at least 85% of which were identified as one of *Zones Urbaines Sensible* (Jobard, 2008)*,* characterised by extremely high levels of youth unemployment and a variety of other social problems (Salanié, 2006). In England, of the rioters interviewed in the Guardian/LSE *Reading the Riots* study who were of working age and not in education, three fifths were unemployed, a pattern confirmed by government data (Ministry of Justice, 2012). Young people appearing before the courts were significantly more likely to come from areas of high deprivation – with almost two-thirds coming from one of the 20% most deprived areas in the country (Singleton, 2011). Finally, the Stockholm suburb of Husby is also relatively disadvantaged, with disproportionate numbers of the young and unemployed – though as Barker (2013) notes, it 'is a long way away from the burned out hyperghettos of absolute deprivation'. Husby is also perceived to be separate or marginalized, cut off from 'the wealthier "visibly Swedish" parts of the city' (Kustermans, 2014: 3) and research by Malmberg et al (2013) found social and spatial marginalization from the state in Sweden to be a statistically significant factor in the urban geography of the rioting.

As Kustermans notes, Husby is not only a relatively poor neighbourhood, it is also one with a very high proportion of minority ethnic residents. Of its approximately 12,000 inhabitants, he suggests over 10,000 are of foreign origin, the vast majority of whom originate from another Nordic country or an EU Member State. To this extent, there are considerable similarities between Husby, Clichy and many of the other neighbourhoods in which the French rioting occurred – the French 'banlieues' also being home to disproportionate numbers of first and second generation immigrants. The 'social segregation' noted in Stockholm (Barker, 2013) appears also to apply to the banlieues (Lagrange, 2009). This, however, would be one point that offers some slight contrast with the riots in England where the spatial segregation is arguably not so strong – though this is relative. This is not to argue that the rioters in England didn't share the 'frustration' of the social marginalization felt by those involved in the French and Swedish riots, merely that in most cities in which there was significant rioting – Salford may be the exception here (Clifton and Allison, 2011) – rioters were both drawn from a range of neighbourhoods and often travelled some distance before becoming involved in the disorder. In Ealing, in west London for example, 60% of those charged with offences committed in the rioting in the area were not residents of the borough, and eyewitness accounts suggested that, once underway, a very diverse group of young people was involved in the disorder (Stenson, 2012).

Dynamics

What is impossible to ignore in the aetiology of rioting and, as outlined above, in these three sets of riots more particularly, is the role of the police. This is visible in at least three ways: the involvement of the police at the heart of the initial 'spark' or 'flashpoint'; the way in which initial protests following these flashpoints were handled by the police; and, more broadly, in the tactics utilised by the police as the disorder started to develop. The rioting in Clichy followed on the heels of the deaths of the two boys in the power substation having run from the attentions of the police. The riots in London and Stockholm both came after the deaths of the citizens at the hands of the police. In all three cases police actions were widely perceived in the communities concerned to lack legitimacy, and as confirmation that the police were not to be trusted. Furthermore, the police reaction to the protests that arose in Clichy, Tottenham and Husby in the aftermaths of the deaths was insufficient to mitigate the anger that was felt and was a significant precursor to the outbreak of trouble. Furthermore, in London, Paris and Stockholm there is evidence that the way in which the police managed the initial disorder was a significant factor in the subsequent diffusion of the rioting (Roche and de Maillard, 2009; Kustermans, 2014).

Where the experiences most obviously depart in the three countries is in relation to the extent and diffusion of the riots. Where the rioting in England and Sweden lasted for four to five days, in France there was disorder for a full three weeks – though it is true to say that this was never longer than four to five days in any one location (Schneider, 2014). The riots in Stockholm were by far the least serious of the three countries, and also spread the least. Although the initial disorder in Husby did migrate to other suburbs of the capital, and very slightly beyond, this was its full extent. In England, the initial night of trouble in Tottenham and Wood Green in north London was followed by rioting across the capital, in a number of other major cities, and in approximately 60 locations altogether. Even this, however, could not compare with the diffusion of the rioting in France, where on at least 300 locations experienced disorder (Body-Gendrot, 2013). In both cases there is some evidence that encrypted messaging – one of the new tools of modern protest movements (Mason, 2012) – was heavily utilised in both England using BlackBerry Messenger (Ball and Brown, 2011) and France using SMS systems (Body-Gendrot, 2013; Sassen, 2010). Such tools, however, were not in evidence in Husby.

Nature

Reading the Riots highlighted the centrality of rioters' anger with the police as perhaps its most consistent finding across the cities in England in which rioting took place (Lewis et al, 2011). In addition to being a reaction to the shooting that precipitated the riots, and to generally poor police-community relations in the

neighbourhoods in which the riots occurred, much of the anger was stimulated by the poor everyday treatment the young people involved they received from the police. Much of their anger coalesced around police stop and search tactics, and the perceived racial profiling underpinning the use of such powers. Precisely such a combination of factors is reported as having been central to the riots in both France and Sweden. In France, Fassin's (2013) ethnographic research illustrates in some detail the discriminatory practices, including selective use of stop and search, operated by the anticrime squads in the Parisian banlieues. Similarly, (Barker, 2013) noted that the 'police were the main targets' of the riots in Sweden, and in understanding this it appears that police 'stop-and-search' practices were particularly relevant, though whether this was long-established police practices primarily related to drugs possession, or a more recently introduced policy by the Swedish Minister of Justice prior to the riots and which focused on irregular immigrants (Adman, 2013; Kustermans, 2014) remains somewhat unclear.

Although there were some strong commonalities it is perhaps in relation to the 'nature' of the disorder that some of the more significant differences can be observed in the three cases. I will focus on two contrasts: those relating to the identity of the rioters themselves, and the nature of the violence involved in the rioting. Earlier the parallels between aspects of the French banlieues and Husby and similar parts of Stockholm were noted – not least the disproportionate concentration of second-generation immigrants and the social segregation of such neighbourhoods. Although data on ethnicity are not collected in France, it is firmly believed that the rioters came mainly from minority backgrounds (Roché, 2006) and the same appears to have been true of Husby and the disorder in other parts of Stockholm (Barker, 2013). By contrast, the riots in England were, in some respects, quite multi-racial. Of those appearing before the courts, for example, 41% self-identified as White, 39% Black, 12% of Mixed ethnicity; six per cent Asian and two per cent Chinese or other (Ministry of Justice, 2012). This varied significantly by area, again tending to reflect the nature of the neighbourhoods in which the riots occurred.

The second set of contrasts can be found in the way in which the anger and frustrations felt by rioters are played out on the streets or, more particularly, which forms of violence predominated and on which targets such violence was focused. In all three cases, and perhaps predictably, the police were very much the focus on much of the rioters' anger. In both France and Sweden a typically broad range of crimes was committed – one study of 208 arrestees in the 93rd department in France found 40% of offences to be crimes against police officers and 30% destruction or damage to public or private goods – but, unlike England, the most visible target of rioters' violence was motor vehicles. In all, in France over 10,000 cars were

destroyed, the bulk by arson (Jobard, 2008). Similarly, Hörnqvist (2014) notes that setting fire to cars in order to attract the police has been a Swedish specialty in certain circles for more than a decade. The riots in 2013 were no exception. By contrast, while attacks on vehicles, including police vehicles, was far from exceptional during the English riots, equally such activity was certainly not the most visible characteristic of the disorder. Certainly so far as media attention was concerned, that honour goes to the looting which was such a significant element of the 2011 riots. To reiterate what was argued earlier, whilst it is important not to exaggerate the extent to which the England riots were dominated by looting (Newburn et al, 2015), it is clear that such activity was far more extensive in England than was the case in either France or Sweden. Indeed, according to Roché (2010: 157) in France 'there was little looting as a rule, even when warehouses, chemists and banks were the objects of the attack', and the same was broadly true of Sweden (Hörnqvist, 2014).

Response

Riots in contemporary times have classically provoked strong denunciation from political leaders, the aim appearing often to be to deflect attention away from any focus on the possibility that economic, social and cultural factors may have played some role in the development of such disorder. This defence of current arrangements is achieved by turning attention onto the behaviour and characteristics of the rioters themselves, potentially demonizing an already marginalized segment of the population. There were very clear illustrations of this tactic in all three cases under consideration here. In the aftermath of the England riots the Prime Minister described the actions of those out on the streets as 'criminality, pure and simple'[2] and argued that the riots were not about race, or cuts, or poverty, but were simply about 'behaviour'. It was, he said, 'People showing indifference to right and wrong. People with a twisted moral code. People with a complete absence of self-restraint'. What we were witnessing, he went on, was 'Irresponsibility. Selfishness. Behaving as if your choices have no consequences. Children without fathers. Schools without discipline. Reward without effort'.[3]

In a speech given in the midst of the Swedish riots, the Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, blamed the riots on 'angry young men' who needed to overcome 'cultural barriers' and come to terms with the rules in a democratic society for expressing dissatisfaction and making claims' (Schierup et al, 2014: 6). In context, and compared

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[2] Speech by David Cameron, 11 August 2011. Full text available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/8695272/UK-riots-text-of-David-Camerons-address-to- Commons.html (accessed 18.5.14)
[3] Speech by David Cameron, 15 August 2011. Full text available at: http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2011/08/society-fight-work-rights (accessed 18.5.14)

to his British counterpart, the statements made by the Swedish Prime Minister were relatively moderate, stressing that the rule of law must prevail. Indeed, in Sweden the political reaction more generally was quite liberal in tone (Hörnqvist, this volume). Of all the responses, however, perhaps the most outspoken and controversial were those by the then Interior Minister, Nicholas Sarkozy, of France. On the evening the two boys died, he announced that there would be no special investigation into the conduct of the police (Schneider, 2014), having earlier shocked many by saying that he would ensure areas such as Clichy were cleaned of racaille ('rabble') and voyous ('riff-raff'); comments that many felt inflamed matters and helped spread the rioting beyond Paris.

In both France and England the response of the penal state was quite dramatic, in part no doubt reflecting the scale of the rioting there. According to France's Interior Ministry, 3,100 people were arrested and placed in police custody during the 2005 riots. Of these, around half were tried straight away, of whom 560 were punished with an immediate custodial or partly custodial sentence (Jobard, 2008; Roché, 2010). In England, courts were forced to hold emergency sessions overnight and at weekends in order to deal with the unprecedented numbers of people being arrested. Within two months, the ten forces most heavily affected by the rioting had made approximately 4,000 arrests. In the first year after the riots, of the more than 2,000 people sentenced by the courts, two thirds received an immediate custodial sentence – the normal sentencing guidelines having been suspended – with sentence being on average almost five times the usual length (Ministry of Justice 2012; Lightowlers and Quirk, 2015).

In Sweden, it is not simply that the penal response to the riots was less extensive than those seen in either France or England – as implied earlier, that would hardly be surprising given the more limited nature of the rioting in Sweden – but it was generally more restrained. According to Schierup et al (2014) about 90% of the reported incidents arising from the disorder and reported to the Swedish police were dropped. Relatively few were pursued through the courts and of those that were, the sentences imposed appear to have been relatively mild. Similarly, and again somewhat in contrast with aspects of the aftermath in France and England, in Sweden the political reaction, the 'populist Sweden Democrats' apart, did not involve a call for more or tougher policing or for the imposition of tough penal policies (Schierup et al, 2014: 16).

Conclusion
It has not been possible in a short article to do more than sketch out some of the similarities and differences between the riots in France, England and Sweden in

recent times – and I have attempted to summarise these in Table 2. My argument has been that, adapting and elaborating on some existing models of riot causation and development, it is possible to construct a broad analytical approach to the historical and comparative study of riots. More particularly, I have argued and have sought to illustrate the importance of moving beyond analyses of the aetiology of riots, and even beyond analyses of the nature and unfolding of riots themselves, and to think more in terms of the full 'life-cycle' of riots including, in particular, a full consideration of the aftermath of such events.

In each of the three cases considered here it appears that the broad *contextual* factors underpinning the disorder – what we might think of as their general political economy – were in some respects quite similar. That is to say, the riots generally occurred in highly disadvantaged communities, where a significant proportion of the residents of those neighbourhoods might legitimately be considered to be poor or socially excluded and who felt themselves in many respects to be cut off from the mainstream of their respective societies. It is important, however, not to overlook the divergences that also appear to exist at this contextual level. Thus, for example, where both the Parisian banlieues and the Stockholm suburbs where rioting occurred have been described as in many ways isolated from much of the rest of their respective cities, it is hard to make such a claim in relation to the bulk of communities where the English riots occurred. Although it cannot be said that extant studies of riots have ignored the spatiality of riots, it might reasonably be argued that there remains much to be done so far as research on this issue is concerned. Examining the ways in which the patterning of economic and social life, the 'natural' environments and physical processes in different urban environments (Thrift, 2009) relate to order and disorder remains somewhat under-researched and under-theorised (though see Body-Gendrot, 2000), not least in helping explain the absence of riots (Newburn, 2015b).

Table 2 about here

In terms of their *dynamics,* there are a number of broad similarities, most obviously that the rioting in all three countries, as is so often the case, was preceded by police actions that angered the local communities and led to protests. In all cases these protests were arguably handed less well, or less sensitively, than might have been expected, leading more or less directly to the outbreak of violence. The spread or diffusion of the rioting, however, differed markedly. Whereas the number of locations in which there was rioting in Sweden was relatively limited, and was certainly less extensive than in England, the riots in France in 2005 were unparalleled in their extent. Again, arguably, the study of the spread of rioting (and other behaviours – Warren and Power, 2015) is something deserving of greater attention

(see Drury and Reicher, 2009). The new social media have begun to receive greater attention as a result of their appearance in relation to recent disorder, but in the three cases briefly considered here, there appear to have been differences in usage – which media as well as whether or not such technologies were utilised – between all three jurisdictions.

What then of the *nature* of the rioting in France, England and Sweden? Much of the violence was directed at the police and, again in all three cases, anger toward the police was a significant motivating factor, with stop and search tactics and perceived racial profiling a key focus. Yet the nature of the violence varied across the jurisdictions. Where looting was a significant feature of the English riots – prompting considerable academic debate as a consequence (Newburn et al, 2015) – it was of much less centrality in France and virtually absent in Sweden. By contrast, in both France and Sweden the burning of cars was rioters preferred mode of protest – this being an established cultural form in both jurisdictions (Haine, 2006; Hörnqvist, 2014).

It is often extremely difficult, for understandable reasons, to create a clear picture of who is involved in riots, and political elites often have much to gain from claims made about the involvement of 'outsiders', of gangs, organised criminals and so on. In the England riots of 2011, however, such was the scale of the arrests made during and after the riots that it is possible to draw a number of conclusions about the demographic characteristics of those involved (this is not so straightforward for either France or Sweden). In terms of participation, there would appear to have been significantly greater ethnic diversity among those involved in the rioting in England (accepting that this, too, varied from location to location) when compared with either France or Sweden.

This scale of *response*, arguably more extensive than most, if not all, riots of recent times in England (Newburn, 2015a), is one illustration of the importance of including the aftermath of riots in any analytical model. How political and penal elites react and respond to riots is potentially important both to understanding their *dynamics* - in both France and Sweden it appears that provocative political statements were important features of the growing tension during the riots – and how the riots are understood afterwards: in all three jurisdictions there was an unwillingness to consider instituting any form of major public inquiry into the events. The *response* of the penal state – the police and the courts in particular – is also crucial to our understanding of riots. In England in 2011, not only was the scale (the numbers arrested, charged, sentenced and imprisoned) different from what had been witnessed elsewhere, but so it appears was the temporal extent of the reaction: the police continued to make arrests well over a year after the riots had ended. Both

scale and extent, together with other elements of the public, political and media reaction have much to add to the comparative understanding of riots.

At the heart of this paper, and as a basis for the comparative study of riots – though it is equally applicable to historical analysis and case studies – I outlined a fourfold 'life-cycle' model of riots. Within each of the four general categories – context, dynamics, nature and response – I identified at least three separate analytical divisions, each of which helps focus and direct attention in research on riots. Although the 'life cycle' approach clearly owes a great deal to other models, David Waddington's 'flashpoints' model in particular, it also departs significantly from them. Most obviously the model seeks to recognise the importance of the aftermath of riots as being of considerable sociological and criminological significance in the understanding of such events. Moreover, the very notion of 'life cycle', points to the need to consider all stages of riots – their context and aetiology, trigger and onset, growth, spread and diffusion, ending and aftermath, together with a whole range of structural, institutional, political and interactional elements as they unfold – in any fully comprehensive analysis of such occasional, usually unpredictable, but enormously socially important events.

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TABLE 1: The 'life-cycle' model for the analysis[4] of riots			
Context	Structural context The material and social circumstances of the society, the cities and neighbourhoods in which riots occur; the nature of the relationships between different social groups and the state; and the ways in which such structural matters relate to the breakdown in order	Political/ ideological context The nature of political systems – national and local - and their impact on different social groups; the relationships between different social groups, especially dissenting groups, to political and ideological institutions	Cultural context The ways in which different social groups understand the social world and their place in it; the nature and organisation of national, local and other media; the cultural understandings by communities of themselves and of the history of conflict
Dynamics	How it starts What in the literature is generally referred to as a 'flashpoint' or triggering event, together with linked developments that may act to stoke, or two mitigate tensions	Diffusion & development How rioting spreads - from one place to others – and what happens to the nature of rioting during that process	Extent & ending The extent of the rioting – both geographically and temporally – together with those factors that contribute to bringing the disorder to a close
Nature	Participation & motivation Which individuals, groups, communities are involved in the rioting and what is their alleged/perceived motivation	Policing the disorder How do the police & other agencies of control respond to the disorder and how, if at all, does their role/tactics change as the rioting unfolds	What is involved What different forms of violence are present – physical violence, arson, damage, looting – and which, if any, predominate
Response	Political/public opinion and media response How political leaders, other opinion formers and the public understand and react to the riots, including the forms of language and rhetoric used. Also, how the riot(s) are reported and constructed in the (mass) media	Penal response How the state, through the police, the courts and other institutions, deals with the rioting both during the disorder and in the aftermath	Public policy response The ways in which the state – both nationally and locally – reacts to the riots in broader public policy terms: in the short-term including whether an official inquiry was instituted, and in the longer-term how the state reacts economically, industrially, culturally and socially to the groups involved, and to the problems identified.

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[4] In my view this model is appropriate both for the general study of riots (individual riots or many), and also the historical and comparative analysis of such disorder (historical analysis in this case being in essence simply another form of comparison)

TABLE 2: The 'life-cycle' model applied to France, England & Sweden

Broad similarities	**Context**	Structural context Deprivation & social marginalisation	Political/ ideological context Broadly similar despite involvement of different groups	Cultural context
	Dynamics	How it starts Misuse of police power Mishandling of protests Racial profiling	Diffusion & development	Extent & ending 4/5 days in both England and Sweden
	Nature	Participation Primarily 2nd generation 'immigrants' (France/Sweden) Motivation Revenge against police	Policing the disorder Mishandling of protest; Misinformation; Failure to manage 'rumour'	What is involved Attacks on police
	Response	Political/public opinion and media response Provocative statements from Interior Minister (France) & Prime Minister (Sweden)	Penal response	Public policy response Unwillingness to institute major public inquiry
Possible key differences	**Context**	Structural context	Political/ ideological context	Cultural context 'Spatial segregation' greater in France & Sweden
	Dynamics	How it starts	Diffusion & development Spread much greater in France; very little diffusion in Sweden	Extent & ending Three weeks in France (but no more than 4/5 days in any location)
	Nature	Participation Ethnically diverse in England Motivation	Policing the disorder What some felt was slow policing response to the disorder (France & England)	What is involved Significantly more looting in England Burning of cars in France and Sweden
	Response	Political/public opinion and media response	Penal response More extensive (numbers & time) and punitive in England & France	Public policy response