

The Cause Of The Disaster

The official cause of the Disaster was given as the ***failure of police control***.

Football games in general were organised in the context of crowd control at the expense of crowd safety. Football supporters were defined within the context of hooliganism.

With specific reference to South Yorkshire Police and Hillsborough, it is obvious that they adhered to this framework and operated with a measure of complacency given that 1989 was a re-run of the semi-final of 1988.

However, many argue that Hillsborough was a Disaster waiting to happen. Also there were changes in 1989 - the senior police officer in overall command had very little experience of such an event. Also there was no process of filtering fans from outside the ground. Most importantly once gate C had been opened there was no attempt at directing fans away from the tunnel and to the side pens where there was still empty spaces. This situation when combined with the failure of the police to recognise and respond to the obvious visible signs of distress of the injured and dying, resulted in the 'Hillsborough Disaster'.