10F Yi Ding, Shaghai University of Sport
“Public Subsidy of Professional Sport and Arena and Stadium Development in China”

While public subsidy to professional sport teams and arena and stadium construction in North America is common, the arbitrary use of public funds has, not surprisingly, always faced resistance there (Scherer, 2016). The use of public funds to support local professional sport franchises and to build arenas in Chinese cities, however, takes a different approach and reveals unique political and cultural patterns. In this paper, we seek to examine the politics surrounding the development of local professional sport teams and arenas and stadiums in the city of Shanghai in China. In particular, we are interested in policy development on arena development and the stakeholders involved in the development process in the context of rapid urban expansion and transformation in contemporary China. While the ideology of urbanism and commercialization of land and property remains a dominant logic in China’s transformation (Hsing, 2010), China’s sport system has meanwhile faced significant structural changes. The combination of the two makes the public subsidy issue surrounding professional sport teams and arena development even more intriguing and warrants more attention. Through media and document analysis and interviews with government officials, sport team managers, business groups, and local community groups, we look to draw a big picture of the political economy of professional sport and arena development in the context of China’s urban transformation and structural changes in sport.

10F Jacob Hindin, Florida State University
“Media Framing and Stadium Subsidies: A Case Study from Miami”

This paper presentation interprets the frames employed by The Miami Herald in its coverage of the construction of Marlins Park. Professional sports venues in the US are often supported by public subsidies and thus become matters of public interest. Local media coverage impacts the subsidization process by framing the debate over subsidies in fashions usually, but not always, amenable to the team. A small literature, usually focusing on a short time period, has evolved to analyze how these local media sources frame stadium subsidies (Delany & Eckstein, 2008; Buist & Mason, 2010). This paper adds to the literature by extending the subsidization frame analysis to examining the changing stance of a single paper in high-resolution over a period of 12 years. The subsidization of Marlins Park remains one of the most high-profile and controversial cases of publicly financing a stadium in the last decade, and presents an excellent setting for a case study of how local media influences the use of public funds for professional teams. This work directly intersects with publicly engaged sociology as it continues the discussion of how sports discourse may impact the utilization of community resources.

10F Jeffrey Montez de Oca, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
“NFL Marketing: Economy of Emotions, Experience and Spectacle”

This research looks at how NFL marketing operates as a form of governmentality that encourages people to produce themselves as consumer citizens. In other words, I look at how sport marketing attempts to engage in the formation of identities that are amendable to commodification. Through a critique of the concept “experience economy,” I argue that NFL marketing attempts to colonize our hearts and souls by reaching into fans’ emotions and intimate relations. Consistent with the principles of experience economy, NFL marketing adds a performative dimension to what Guy Debord calls “spectacle” that encourages fans to experience artifice as real and embodied. This will be demonstrated through close analysis of recent NFL marketing campaigns. This talk engages with the conference theme by encouraging reflection upon the politics of sport consumption that is typically left unstated.
This paper presentation examines the case study of contemporary football supporters and the particular strains and grievances which have motivated a new wave of protests and forms of activism during the late twentieth and early twenty first century. Central to this thesis investigation is the fan movement to permit ‘standing’ at football matches in England and Wales and thus this paper presentation introduces this case study by contextualising the social, cultural and political conditions out of which specific legislation to make all top level football grounds ‘all-seater’ emerged during the transformation and new consumption of English football at the turn of the late twentieth and early twenty first century. The paper subsequently explores the mobilisations of some supporters initially led by the fanzine movement, which saw the emergence of informal and formal networks and independent fan organisations in developing a ‘culture of contestation’ during the late 1980’s and 1990’s against various aspects of ‘modern’ football. The paper thus tells the story of this movement across a 25 year period and examines the various motivations, tactics and mobilisations of these informal and formal networks of supporters. The latest phase of this movement (the Safe Standing campaign) has received widespread political interest and is due to be trialled in Scottish football at Celtic Park during the 2016/2017 season.