9E Ari de Wilde, Eastern Connecticut State University & Greg Kane, Eastern Connecticut State University
“Visualization, Virtual Reality and the Future in Sport Studies: The Case of ‘Ghosts of the Garden’”

The allied fields of humanistic sport studies are at a digital crossroads and they have been for some time. From digitized sources to the politics of who owns and who has access to the Internet, scholars in sport studies have examined a range of issues in regard to computers, digitization and sport. One of the most interesting applications of digital technology is visualization and sport studies. As scholars have shown, computer-aided visualizations can serve as powerful forms of scholarship. Socio-cultural scholars can use visualizations to move beyond linear written scholarship and provide completely non-linear perspectives. For many, the most interesting types of visualizations are virtual reality applications. Popular and scholarly pundits have discussed virtual realities’ potential for over twenty years. We have seen technologies such as Second Life allow scholars to hold virtual conferences. However, virtual reality as a Star Trek “Holodeck” experience has not come of age. With the release of the Oculus Rift as well as other high quality virtual reality headsets, humanity is closing in on the “Holodeck” dream. In sport, many scholars talk about the technologies’ potential. Much of the scholarship has focused on sport and performance. The technology, though, holds potential as scholarship in critical sport studies. In our own experience, visualization can be an important scholarly tool and product. In 2009, I (Ari) converted an image I found of a 1908 Madison Square Garden Six Day Bicycle Race in the Library of Congress’ digital photo archive into an interactive visualization. The visualization still exists as “Ghosts of the Garden” on Ohio State’s ehistory website. Thus, we examine our experiences with digital visualizations and sport and its potential future.

9E Ezzeldin Aly, Florida A&M University & Sherin Y. Elmahdy, University of Wisconsin La Crosse
“Study Sport Socioeconomics Impact of using Internet Fundraising on Team and Individual Sports”

This study is about the importance of using web-fundraising, different online programs, and social media for team and individual sports fundraising. Researchers explore ideas and programs for internet fundraising and address internet fundraising, and how it can improve the socioeconomic impact of team & individual sports participation. Currently, joining youth sports programs such as baseball, basketball, soccer, football, and swimming has become expensive. Parents enrolling their kids in sports is a stressful experience because of traveling, lodging, equipment, and tournament fees. The researchers interviewed and surveyed parents, coaches, managers and tournament organizers. Some issues that arose were dependence on internet fundraising experience, the importance of web – fundraising to support financial expenses, satisfaction with the facility entry fees, tournament fees, and the amount of events each week. The researchers used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) to analyze the data collected. The use of internet fundraising will have a positive social and economic impact on families. Internet fundraising will encourage parents to enroll their kids into different sports programs. In addition, internet fundraising will help close the socioeconomic gap and open more opportunities to all youth to participate in sports.
By way of state mandate, high schools are required to offer health and physical education (HOPE) courses online to their students. This controversial initiative, promoted by Florida Virtual Schools (FLVS), serves the nearly 500,000 students who enroll in online PE and other online course offerings as part of their educational experiences. In this auto-ethnography, I reflect upon my experiences as a high school physical education teacher working in traditional, ‘in-person’ PE contexts in the age of virtual PE. I discuss both the skepticism I and other school-based teachers held (and to some extent continue to hold) and what I came to see were some benefits of the online platform--namely in how virtual PE’s space-time dynamism led to increased participation and engagement for many students. In my analysis, I draw upon a qualitative analysis of my own experiences and those of fellow teachers and students to explore how online enrolled HOPE students might better develop the skills needed to be healthy and create a positive self-conception as achieved through face-to-face classes (see also Taylor, Spray, & Pearson, 2014).

Further research through document review and interviews will determine the challenges faced by teachers and students partaking in online classes. I look specifically at relations and complexities of body-space mediation and immediacy whereby the school setting (where the teacher can observe if a student is able to perform sport skill) and how the publically-engaged pedagogue might look to enhance the corporeal co-presence of teacher and learner in the digital environment. The similarities and differences of the programs can be used to provide more effective and accountable ways of engaging students in physical education, both online and in the classroom.