9I Lawrence Wenner, Loyola Marymount University
“Mediatization and the Super Bowl at 50: Key Changes in an American Sporting Mega-Event”

Using an interlinked set of critical theories centered on mediatization and commodification, this paper assesses key changes seen in a case study of the Super Bowl’s 50th anniversary to understand the evolution of the penultimate American sporting mega-event. The paper is framed by consideration of how the Super Bowl is unique in terms of its context as a sporting mega-event and how its overarching “superlogic” interacts with its mythic and structural functioning. The analysis focuses on select key changes evident in Super Bowl 50, including changes in the nature of communal focus, in a shift of figure-ground relationships in heightened celebration of Super Bowl advertising, in the mediated packaging of the Super Bowl through manufactured events, and in how “deep play” and motivations for watching the game have been altered by the raised profile of online betting. The conclusion focuses on how three interlocking forces—technology, history, and nation—continue to play an outsized role in the Super Bowl spectacle being able to command cultural influence.

9I Simon Licen, Washington State University
“Effects of Media Consumption of Two (Mega-) Events in Slovenia”

International mega-events contribute to the promotion of patriotism. Quantitatively and qualitatively skewed media reports are rewarded with increased circulation and viewership, though recent studies indicate that they might attract more nationalistic audiences rather than making them such. While the relationship between media consumption and nationalism has been methodically examined in long-standing democracies, studies in countries with short histories of nationhood remain isolated. These countries usually need to (re-)shape a national identity and often try to use sport for this purpose. This paper will compare the effects of media consumption of two international sports events—the 2013 EuroBasket and the 2016 Summer Olympics—on nationalistic feelings in Slovenia. While only the second is a mega-event, the first is a major event that Slovenia hosted. Results cannot be summarized at this time because the survey related to the Rio Olympics has yet to be distributed; still, the comparison should provide insight into the scope and magnitude of the influence of sports onto national populations. Nationalism and mega-events are occasionally discussed in mainstream media (e.g., fan violence at the 2016 UEFA Euro), and scholars are sometimes invited to comment on such occurrences. This paper will hopefully inform their appearances and contribute to public debates in “new democracies.”

9I John Vincent, University of Alabama; Edward (Ted) Kian, Oklahoma State University; Olan Scott, University of Canberra & John Harris, Glasgow Caledonian University
“England Expects but the Welsh Dragon Underdog is Defiant”

Shaped by inductive framing analysis, and drawing on Anderson’s (1983) concept of the ‘imagined community’ and Guibernau’s (2007) strategies for creating and uniting citizens around a collective national identity, this study examined Englishness and Welshness through the prism of British newspaper narratives during the 2015 Rugby World Cup and 2016 UEFA EURO Football Championships. Both of these mega international sporting events provided a context where national identity politics and athletic competition intersected for the mediated consumption of the ‘imagined community.’ Inviting comparisons, both tournaments pitted neighbors and traditional rivals, England and Wales together in the same groups. Given the popularity of both rugby and football in these nations, in the buildup and immediate aftermath of both games the eyes of the British newspaper journalists were fixated on the Welsh and English teams. In this context the coaches and players became exemplars of their respective national myths and values,
which captured the public’s imagination. Given that national identity is fluid and continually evolving, the narratives in Britain’s London-based serious and popular ‘red-top’ newspapers provided a snapshot of both Welsh and English identity in the rarefied, emotional, carnivalvesque atmosphere of both mega sporting events.

_9I Allyson Araujo, Dandara Queiroga de Oliveira Sousa, Rafael de Gois Tinoco, Alison Pereira Batista, Joyce Mariana Alves Barros, and Marcio Romeu Ribas de Oliveira_, Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte

“Media and Legacy of the World Cup 2014: Exploring the Perception of High School Students Through Media Education”

This paper uses media education to explore the legacy of mega sports events. In Brazil as in other countries, the media narratives are responsible for giving visibility to the tangible and intangible legacy of mega sports events. In this context our goal is to identify and discuss the social legacy from the perspective of high school students of the city of Natal (RN-Brazil). The research was conducted in 3 public schools with over 250 students. After analyzing the professional media narratives in the country, the students created their own media content. The social perception of students on the 2014 World Cup in Brazil was expressed in five digital magazines, one newspaper and seven blogs, analyzed using content analysis to create of 5 categories of analysis. We highlight the ethical, the cultural differences, the sporting excellence and the criticism of public funds spending with material legacy as the most recurrent themes in the production of students. Confronting the narratives of content produced by professional media and the content produced by students, we perceive distance between the economic and social interests, respectively.

_9I Phil Hatlem_, Saint Leo University

“The Boston Bid: Media’s Role in its Demise”

The Olympic Games inspire many people to believe in grand ideas: cooperation between nations, purity in sport and competition, and athletes achieving excellence at the highest athletic levels (McDonald, 2006). Many of these grand ideas are influenced by the media through selective distribution of information; media sources vary in the way they emphasize, package and transmit content (Rutledge, 2008). However, the appeal of the Games may be leveraged to promote political and ideological messages other than Olympism (Finlay, 2011). Or they may not. Prior to July of 2015 it appeared that the city of Boston would be a viable candidate city to host the 2024 Summer Olympic Games. But on July 27, 2015 its planned bid collapsed under the weight of cost estimates and low public support (Arsenault & Levenson, 2015). By examining the media portrayal of the issues involved in the bid, the author hopes to determine what role the media may have played in swaying public opinion regarding the bid, and if it is found that the media did attempt to influence, what was its motives.