The study of sport, society, and technology is theoretically, substantively, methodologically, and disciplinarily diverse. Incorporating the rapid development of technologies and their expanding applications in sport – from telecommunications to high performance – interdisciplinary fields such as science and technology studies and the sociology of sport are tasked with interrogating the social, cultural, historical, and economic intersections of an ever-expanding techno-scientific landscape. In this paper we build upon a previous review of North American authors, topics, and abstracts, in order to assess current research. In doing so we also probe the possibilities for new directions through an examination of recent book-length works from sport studies scholars and an analysis of abstracts from internationally focused conferences such as the International Sport Sociology Association (ISSA) and the European Association for the Study of Science and Technology (EASST). This paper concludes with a brief discussion of the possible contributions of critical science and technology approaches to public engagements with, and understandings of, sports.

This paper critically examines how fitness-tracking devices (such as Fitbits and Jawbone UP) are targeted to, and used by, ageing populations. I examine how commercial and medical narratives encourage Third Agers to use these devices in order to discipline their ageing bodies. Gilleard and Higgs (2002) define Third Age as a cultural field linked to a post-working lifestyle shaped by widespread consumption and a rejection of old age. My paper will be split into two parts. First, I will critically analyse promotional and medical material published on fitness-tracking devices, investigating how Third Agers are positioned as a target market for these products. Second, I will analyze the contributions that Third Agers make to on-line discussion forums about their use of fitness-tracking technology (e.g. forums hosted by Fitbit and the “Quantified Self” movement). By gaining insight into their experiences with fitness-tracking technology, I will investigate how Third Agers navigate, and potentially challenge, the expectations placed on them to actively manage the ageing process. This focus on the personal experiences of Third Agers with fitness-tracking technology aligns with a key interest of the “Sport, Society & Technology” panel, namely, public engagement with sport-related technology.

In the lead up to the 2012 London Games, the Health Protection Agency (HPA) developed an unprecedented number of biosurveillance systems to detect for disease outbreaks throughout the Games. By monitoring both physical (i.e. visits to primary health providers) and digital (i.e. social media feeds) expressions of sickness, the HPA sought to respond to and eradicate health threats with immediacy. By applying critical discourse analysis to public health reports and social media feeds, this paper investigates the discursive notion of biosurveillance in the 2012 London Olympics to offer insight on how the capitalistic and governmental underpinnings of the Games were reflected through the implementation of biosurveillance techniques. Drawing on Foucault’s notion of biopower and governmentality, Petersen’s risk literature, and Boykoff’s notion of celebration capitalism, this paper posits that biosurveillance was an essential practice to regulate the threat of health risks in order to protect the Olympic brand and its
assets. In the process, the act of biosurveillance reifies the necessity of mass securitization and substantiates unprecedented levels of public surveillance for the preservation of the Olympic industry.

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“eSports as ‘Sport’: Impact of Technology on Sociological Definition of Sport”

Organized competitive video gaming, more commonly known as eSports, has recently exploded in popularity through a significant growth of participants, online viewership, and even in-person championships, where revenue is estimated to reach $1 billion globally by 2019 (Ogus, 2016; Riddell, 2016). Previously viewed by many in traditional sport as a niche technologically-enhanced activity, recreational eSports initiatives are thriving on college campuses (“UCI to launch,” 2016). Furthermore, collegiate athletic departments have begun offering scholarships to eSports ‘athletes’ (Keiper, Manning, Jenny, Olrich, & Croft, 2016). The popularity of eSports is evident but the acceptance of eSports into collegiate athletic departments as a sport needs further investigation. This presentation will examine the contemporary topic of eSports through the application of Theory of Planned Behavior. Consideration will be given to the following:

1) to what extent eSports may meet traditional sociological definitions of sport;
2) behavioral, normative and control beliefs that may impact how a person views or accepts eSports within the greater realm of sport;
3) the extent technology influences the fit of eSports within traditional sociological definitions of sport (Jenny, Manning, Keiper, & Olrich, 2016); and
4) application of Theory of Planned Behavior to explain the adoption of eSports into intercollegiate athletic programs.