1E: Simon Darnell, University of Toronto & Peter Nash, University of Toronto
“Athletes and Social Activism: Context, Continuity, and Change”

In the context of sport, an activist has been defined as: ‘a person who acts strategically with others, on the basis of shared values, to create a more just society’ (Watt et al, 2003, cited in Wilson, 2012). In this presentation, we draw on various data (first-hand interviews, published interviews, journalist accounts) to understand the similarities and differences in the experiences of athlete activists from the 1960s through to today, as well as the current relationship between sport and social activism. The results indicate that while athlete activists in previous generations tended to view and understand social issues and sport rather separately, contemporary athletes experience sport and activism in a more direct and overlapping fashion. This increasing overlap or collision between sport and social issues is driven by a number of factors (e.g. increased sports media, the invention of social media, the corporatization of sport, the relationship between sport and politics), all of which contribute to the ‘social education process’ that contemporary athletes undergo. We argue, therefore, that more than ‘choosing’ to engage in activism, contemporary athlete-activists are effectively thrust into activism or feel compelled to act. The implications for sustained and effective social activism in and through sport are discussed.

1E: Michael Giardina, Florida State University & Neal Ternes, Florida State University
“A Common-sense, Fiscally-conservative Approach: Sport, Politics, and the Undoing of Democracy in Wisconsin”

On January 27, 2015, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker made public comments in support of at least $220 million in public funding for a new basketball arena for the National Basketball Association’s Milwaukee Bucks. Calling his plan “a common-sense, fiscally-conservative approach” Walker made sweeping statements that suggest the arena and tax revenue therefrom would “generate enough money to cover debt repayments on $220 million in state-issued bonds for a new arena.” In signaling support for the new arena, Walker and many other Wisconsin business leaders and politicians trotted out well-worn (if debunked) clichés about the economic impact of a new arena on the local community, and how such a move was absolutely necessary to keep the Bucks from leaving the city and/or state. On the very same day, Walker’s office also announced plans to cut the vaunted University of Wisconsin System by $300 million over two years, plans that would likely lead to faculty and staff layoffs, furloughs, and a diminished capacity to provide educational services to students. His plan also called for the elimination of certain key oversight protections for faculty. It is at the intersection of these two instances that the free-market logics of the neoliberal age are revealed. In this presentation, we read the competing narratives of arena construction and the assaults on public education over and against a prevailing neoliberal rationality, detailing how both narratives are implicated in if not constitutive of the ‘undoing of democracy’—a process through which, as Wendy Brown (2015) details, democracy itself is refashioned into an economic register of human capital, market competition, and so forth.

1E: Peter Donnelly, University of Toronto
“Some Tools for a Public Sociology of Sport: Crowdsourcing, Citizen Science and Citizen History”

The internet and the web have grown so fast in the last 25 years that it has been difficult for academics to keep up with the pace of change, and to utilize many of the possibilities available. In this presentation, I examine my own growing awareness and use of data readily available on web sites – especially for distributive analyses; and then outline three projects that use the potential of the internet to collect, evaluate, and provide living archives of data. At the Centre for Sport Policy Studies at the University of
Toronto we have used crowdsourcing for fact checking on our Olympic gender audits; citizen science for a major and ongoing project on multiculturalism; and citizen history for a current project relating to physical culture and Canada’s Centennial (1967) and Sesquicentennial (2017).

**1E: Jay Scherer, University of Alberta; Jordan Koch, University of Alberta & Nicholas Holt, University of Alberta**

“**Structural Inequality, Homelessness and Neoliberal Economies of Moral Worth: Salvaging the Self Through Sport?**”

Against the backdrop of the expansion of structural inequality in cities around the world, various public and private organizations continue to provide a range of sport-for-development programs for the ‘urban outcasts’ (Wacquant, 2008) of the global economy. This presentation explores the salience of weekly floor hockey matches in the inner-city of Edmonton, Alberta, for a group of men who are experiencing homelessness and who have themselves been publicly stigmatized within neoliberal economies of moral worth as social problems who lack personal responsibility (Farrugia, Smyth & Harrison, 2015). In so doing, we focus on how these sporting interludes served as convivial, safe, and consistent/ordered events that nurtured meaningful relationships (with other participants and social workers) and a genuine sense of community that helped to construct morally worthwhile subjectivities. The weekly floor hockey matches, thus, provided valuable resources in the broader struggle for what Snow and Anderson (1993) have called ‘salvaging the self’ for individuals who embody a repertoire of trauma associated with homelessness. Our analysis is drawn from over three-years of ethnographic field notes, as well as interviews with eight men aged 25-42 years who had attended the weekly floor hockey programs for at least four years.

**1E Guilherme Nothen, University of Toronto & Secretaria de Estado de Educação do Distrito Federal, Brazil**

“(Un)Masked Lives: An Inquiry into the Manufacture of an Ice Hockey Artifact”

This paper documents the changing landscapes of the manufacture of ice hockey equipment in Canada. This was once a burgeoning branch of industrial activity, but has more recently been heavily impacted by outsourcing and offshoring tendencies (especially from the early 1990s onwards). In little less than two decades, imposing manufacturing plants – in which thousands of workers were employed – have been systematically shut down by a handful of multinational corporations, thoroughly reducing Canada’s share in the production of the equipment needed for the practice of what is often deemed its national game. Today, roughly ninety percent of the hockey gear consumed in Canada is manufactured in the global south, most notably in Asia. The research presented here unfolds in the aftermath of these transformations, paying particular attention to the perspective of the small manufacturers of ice hockey equipment that are still based on Canadian soil. For six months, I have carried out participant observations in a factory where goalie masks are produced. Drawing upon the findings that derive from my experience in this setting, I try to shed some light on everyday life on the assembly line; the relationships that the workers have with hockey; and, most fundamentally, the difficulties encountered by small companies attempting to survive at the margins of a market dominated by major corporations. To conclude, I discuss the specificities of goalie masks as sporting commodities/artifacts, seeking to illustrate the residues of artisanship that, in some special cases, pervade the manufacture of these objects to this day – thus resisting the general drive towards standardization that characterizes the sports equipment industry more broadly.