5A Camille Croteau, Western University

“Bio-Politics: A Discourse Analysis on the 2015 Consensus for Sex Reassignment”

Since 2004, the International Olympic Committee has admitted the participation of transitioned (i.e. post-operative transsexual) athletes in elite competition through recommendations found in the Stockholm Consensus and, more recently, the IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism, November 2015. These legal and hormonal modifications are argued to restrict the athletes' human rights by requiring physical alterations to be required for inclusion. However, critics fear for the safety of female athletes specifically from physical characteristics or enhancements that could linger in male-to-female transitioned bodies, and physically and mentally diminish the spirit of women's sports. Overlapping broader sociopolitical contexts, analysis of the 2015 IOC Consensus can identify how transitioned athletes are regulated through sport policy (Liao & Markula, 2009). Adding to the critical body of sport discourse analysis (DA; Nicholls, Giles, & Sethna, 2010), this Foucaultian DA examines the application of sexuality as a form of bio-power, which centers humans and sexuality as a form of leverage within the political system and identifies ways in which sexuality politics can transmit ideologies (Foucault, 1978; 1980). While non-exhaustive, this aims to understand the transitioned athletes' place in today's society as well as ideologies that are perpetuated.

5A Scott Jedlicka, Washington State University

“Sport and International Relations: Reconsidering State Interest and Influence”

Sport’s political “uses” feature prominently in studies of the relationship between sport and politics. In an international relations context, sport is often used by states to foster diplomacy and to demonstrate or exert soft power (Cha, 2009). While characterizations of sport as a political tool or as a medium through which to achieve political ends are empirically valid, they often fail to consider the more fundamental question of why states—in the course of using sport for political objectives—choose to respect the authority of an international sport governance system which operates mostly outside of direct state control. This paper advances and critiques three hypotheses for state acceptance of international sport governance; two are derivative of dominant paradigms in international relations, while the third builds upon sociohistorical research on the Olympic movement and international sport (Guttmann, 1992; Keys, 2006). Each suggests different conclusions regarding sport’s inherent political utility as well as governmental actors’ ability (and willingness) to advance national and global interests through international sport. As public movements calling for organizational transparency and accountability in international sport become increasingly strident, a fundamental understanding of international sport’s political status within the state system can inform the pursuit of effective governance improvements.

5A Wanyoung Lee & Eun Young Kye, Hanyang University

“Transformation of City Plaza from Street Cheering Space into Political Arenas from Liberalist in Korea”

This paper is intended to figure out how the discourses of a public space have been socially and politically constructed and changed. The 2002 Korea-Japan FIFA World Cup was an important occasion to draw huge crowd onto the Seoul Plaza which used to be few people’s resting area. During the FIFA World Cup, about several million people gathered around City Plaza to cheer Korean soccer team. Street cheering at City Plaza provided the special meanings for Seoul Plaza; the Plaza is a civil space for all people regardless of class, gender, ethnicity and even sexual orientation. Just after the 2002 World Cup, thousands of people gathered to mourn two victims of American tanks under military drill and to protest against Korean government’s moderate reaction to the accident. Since then, City Plaza is a site for left
social movement in Korea; labor union members have gathered at City Plaza for wage increase and cutting down of labor hours; political protests against conservative governments have been held at City Plaza; recently queer festival is organized at City Plaza. Finally, the paper argues that street cheering space has been easily transformed into political arenas because of its popular familiarity and accessibility.

5A Yoav Dubinsky, University of Tennessee, Knoxville & Lars Dzikus, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
““The Politics Around Israel’s Participation in the 2016 Olympic Games”

The Olympic Games are arguably the biggest event of humankind: not only do nearly all countries are engaged, the games also serve as a platform for future nations seeking independence to publically display themselves on the biggest international stage. This qualitative study analyzes how the Israeli-Arabic conflict, one of the most complicated conflicts in the world, is manifested in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Although the Olympic Games aspire to promote peace and respect between nations, international politics surrounded Israel's participation even before the country’s independence in the forms of boycotts and even terrorism. The research focuses on political reactions of Muslim and Arabic countries and athletes competing against Israelis, on public engagements in peaceful activities where Israelis participate and on the controversy surrounding the commemoration of the 11 Israeli athletes, coaches and referees that were murdered in the terror attack during the 1972 Munich Olympic Games. The research follows the Israeli delegation in the news during qualification competitions, physically in Israel during the preparation of the delegation and as an accredited journalist in Brazil during the Olympic Games, analyzing different political manifestations and the use of sports for public diplomacy.

5A Dimitris Xenakis, University of Crete & Nikos Lekakis, University of Crete
“From ‘Hasbara’ to the Palastine-Israel Sport Conflict”

Studies in sport for nation-building mostly involve cases where rival segments in polarized societies build bridges and unite through sport. In the Israel-Palestine case, the problem stems from the Palestinian Football Associations (PFA) demands and aspirations to function independent of Israeli surveillance in a sovereign Palestinian nation state. Using netnographic methods, this paper presents this case in an international relations (IR) theoretic framework, the evidence showing that the Palestinian society’s collective memory of the nation state is hard to dissipate in solutions where Israel retains its hegemonic role. PFA’s institutional power, through its membership to FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), threatens Israel's own membership and thus its international image, proving in essence to be a hard power resource. It appears that FIFA would operate more effectively as a non-political broker of peace, if its administration was restructured to include a small advisory unit, with expertise in the history, politics and IR of all its member states.