9C Julie Maier, University of Maryland at College Park
“A Critical Examination of Exercise Prescriptions for Mental Healthcare”

In May of 2015, the Washington Post published an article entitled “D.C. doctor’s Rx: A stroll in the park instead of a trip to the pharmacy” (Sellers, 2015). In the article, the author described a Washington, DC physician’s efforts to encourage healthcare providers to prescribe their patients outdoor recreation, or a “park prescription,” as a way to reduce the negative health outcomes associated with a range of chronic health issues. This DC-based program is an example of a growing nationwide effort focused on the promotion of exercise as a type of therapeutic. At times, as evidenced by the news story, physical activity is juxtaposed with pharmaceuticals, with exercise positioned as the (morally) superior alternative. Interestingly, feminist and critical scholars who speak out against the medicalization and pharmaceuticalization of women’s health are less vocal when it comes to such “exercise is medicine” discourse. In this presentation, I examine the reasons why lifestyle approaches to healthcare are not as heavily scrutinized as pharmaceuticals. This will entail mapping the myriad economic, political, sociocultural, and individual-level factors that come together in the current Western context to create binaries (e.g. natural vs. synthetic; exercise vs. biomedicine) and hierarchies related to mental health treatments.

9C Andrea Scott-Bell, Northumbria University
“The Medical Management of Mental Health in English Professional Football”

Utilising data derived from semi-structured interviews with doctors and physiotherapists, this paper reflects on the medical management of psychological issues among English professional footballers. Although few would expect sports medicine to lead the way in the bio-psychological understanding of mental health conditions, clinicians in the current study recognised their role in the management of athletes’ emotional health, including where this manifested in a mental health condition. Despite this, clinicians talked of their uncertainty around the management of these conditions. Interview data exposed dissimilar practice relating to athlete-clinician confidentiality/disclosure of conditions to managers, coaches and fellow athletes. While physiotherapists were often the first port-of-call for athletes, many felt ill-equipped to manage their needs. Conversely, although doctors recognised their greater expertise of mental health conditions, their often part-time status in football negated their ability to establish the relationships needed for athletes to seek their support. Data indicate a need to further assess the degree to which athletes experience mental health problems. Most importantly, a review of the training needs of clinicians must be established if mental health needs are to be identified and managed appropriately. Finally, a careful look at the social organisation of sports medicine in professional sport, particularly the autonomy of clinicians relative to coaches and managers will be central to establishing collaborative athlete-clinician relationships that will be at the heart of better mental healthcare in sport.

9C Meungguk Park, Southern Illinois University; Incheol Jang, Southern Illinois University; Taeho Yoh, Southern Illinois University & David J. Shonk, James Madison University
“Examining Factors Affecting Cancer Survivors’ Loyalty to Charity Sporting Events”

Charity affiliated sporting events (CSEs) have become one of the most popular fundraising methods for community service organizations. However, the number of participants in major CSEs has declined in recent years. In order to develop effective strategies to retain participants in CSEs, it is critical for practitioners to enhance participants’ loyalty to the event. This research examined factors affecting cancer survivors’ loyalty to their CSEs. Data were collected from 72 cancer survivors who participated in the
American Cancer Society’s 2012 and 2015 Relay For Life events in a Midwestern State (Male = 26.8%, Female = 73.2%). From the comprehensive review of the literature and interviews with CSE managers, the authors identified three antecedents influencing cancer survivors’ loyalty: Sense of Accomplishment, Trust in the CSE, and Sense of Community. The regression model with the three factors on Loyalty was significant (F (3, 66) = 28.71, p< .001), and the three antecedents explained 56% of the total variance in Loyalty. Furthermore, Sense of Community ($\hat{R}^2 = .47$) and Trust ($\hat{R}^2 = .38$) were found to be significant predictors. Findings of this study will provide both practitioners and academics with valuable insight into how to enhance cancer survivors’ loyalty to their CSEs.

9C Noah S. Webb, Florida State University; Amy M. Burdette, Florida State University; Joshua I. Newman, Florida State University; Sherrina S. Lofton, Florida State University & Michael C. Turner, Florida State University
“Health and Injury in American Football: A Life Course Perspective”

Background: While numerous studies highlight the health and social benefits of sport participation across the life course, scholars and public health officials are increasingly aware of the potentially deleterious effects of high impact sports on health in later life. Our qualitative study explores the motivating factors that influence football participation and the associated health benefits and risks of playing football throughout the life course – from adolescence to late adulthood. Methods: This study incorporates fifty-five semi-structured interviews with athletes at varying stages of football participation: interscholastic (middle and high school, including their parents), intercollegiate (Division-I), and professional (NFL, including current and retired). Participants were recruited via purposive, convenience sampling. We used a set list of questions during the interviews that specifically addressed sport-related socialization, the perceived health benefits and risks, and the role of injury in football. Findings: Results suggest that perceptions about football participation and health are influenced by a variety of social factors. We identify discordance between the perceived social benefits of sport and the associated health risks of football participation. Our findings will help facilitate research on this topic in the sociology of sport and will contribute to the public engagement between scholars and public health officials.