

# **GLOBAL GAMES, GLOBAL GOALS**

## **LOCATING AMERICA IN THE CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL REALMS OF SPORTS**

**LEIPZIG, MARCH 30-31, 2012**

Approaching the issue of sports in a scholarly context reveals an intriguing paradox: While sports is of utmost importance when speaking about American society, its cultural significance is often underappreciated, particularly in the European academic landscape. Since it embraces many aspects of life, such as politics, media, popular culture, history, and health, sports offers a myriad of possible research foci. In fact, American sports and sport lifestyle(s) influence cultures around the world while simultaneously being subject to influences from other cultures as well. The study of sports within an American context is thus not limited to the national level: Sports organizations, sports gear enterprises, and athletes of all possible types operate internationally, making the topic of sports highly relevant on a global scale.

With the third annual American Studies Leipzig MA-level graduate conference, "Global Games, Global Goals," we seek to investigate the cultural, social, and political realms of sports in an interdisciplinary framework. Presenters could, among many other possibilities, address the following issues: In how far have sports and lifestyles worldwide been subject to 'Americanization' and how have American sports been globalized? What are the political and economic dimensions of major sport events such as the Olympic Games or the Super Bowl? In what ways has sports served as a means of gaining social mobility in the United States? How are race and gender issues reflected in sports? How is sports represented in film and literature?

Calling for a wide array of proposals, we would also welcome contributions that offer an 'unusual' perspective. Proposals could, for example, investigate the notions of success, defeat, and team spirit, or the role of urban spaces for recently developed sports such as cross-golf or urban bouldering. Contributions could furthermore deal with lifestyles created through sports, possibly focusing on some of the following questions: How do sport brands influence lifestyles or identity construction? How is sports represented in video/console games, and what trends do these games indicate regarding the interplay between physical and virtual sports? With such a diversity of possible approaches, we hope to achieve a multitude of insights into American society and culture in a transnational context.

As a platform to discuss the complexities of sports and society within the wide spectrum of academic and professional contexts, our conference invites all interested MA-level students and, moreover, professionals in the field of sports. Within this unique forum, participants will have the chance to present their work to an international audience, allowing for excellent networking opportunities.

Please note that there will be no conference fee. Moreover, we will offer travel and accommodation grants for a limited number of presenters. Please submit your proposal (max. 300 words) for a 20-minute presentation including your name, current level of graduate study, affiliated university or current occupation, and e-mail address to [asl-gradconference@uni-leipzig.de](mailto:asl-gradconference@uni-leipzig.de) by January 15, 2012. We will notify all proposal contributors by January 23, 2012.

For more information please refer to <http://americanstudies.uni-leipzig.de/asl-gradconference2012> or contact us via e-mail.