

PhD Abstract

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Provisional Title: Mind Sports in Competition: Globalisation of Social Games and Politico-Social Influence at the Local Level – the Case of Bridge

Theme: Global Studies

Abstract: In the context of globalisation, games and sports - as congregating and bonding cultural elements - contribute to the existence of a global culture. Sports are an excellent medium for cultural and political influence, on account of their popularity and quick expansion. Even better for this purpose are Mind Sports, which are less circumscribed by gender, age, ethnicity, religion, and physique. Among Mind Sports, bridge may have an advantage in terms of promoting society-transforming policies, owing to some of its intrinsic characteristics: it is simultaneously competitive and cooperative; it requires decision-making on the basis of incomplete information, which promotes the development of initiative and is hence a great tool for empowering girls and young women (especially in places where they are not encouraged in these attributes); it combines reasoning with social skills, with great benefits to the immune system, autonomy and wellbeing, especially in the elderly population.

Could, therefore, bridge be an interesting way to promote a more inclusive, fair, and cohesive society, and at the same time increase longevity and social wellbeing? Tracking recent lines of investigation in the fields of the Sociology of Mind Sports and Bridge Sociology may help to answer these questions and, eventually, point the way to an affirmative answer.

Key Words: Bridge; Culture; Discrimination; Games; Gender; Globalization; Health; Intergenerationality; Leisure Times; Mind Sports; Sociology of Sports.