

HISTORY WORKSHOP

The Department of History

Tuesdays ~ 12:30-1:30 pm ~ ZOOM

Baller Culture: The Expression and Resistance of Black Sporting Culture from 1988-2008

Dr. Drew Brown

University of Delaware

October 13, 2020

12:30-1:30 pm

[Zoom ID: 946 2190 5729](#)

P/W: UDHistory



The term “Baller” is one of the oldest slang term still used heavily today. Originally it was used as an Ebonics or African American Vernacular English (AAVE) term to identify a particular cultural identity. But, it has evolved and expanded significantly since its inception. In the sporting context, the term Baller describes Black American (mostly male) athletes who carry a unique set of cultural practices, posture, attitude, style, and set of beliefs that have, in large, been influenced by traditional Black expressions and lived experiences. This presentation, first, explores the foundations of the term Baller by historically mapping it from its origins in “the streets” (i.e. the social-economical experiences of lower-class) and through the rise of hip hop. Secondly, this presentation uses content analysis of culture materials to examine the way Baller identity is used by contemporary Black American athletes to a) express themselves, b) reimagine their identity, and c) resist cultural erasures of white supremacy.

Dr. Brown is a leading young scholar of race, sports and culture. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at the University of Delaware where he teaches a range of topics that examine the culture and existence of Africana people. His courses include: “Race and Sports”, “The Black Male Experience,” and “Sports, Media, and Culture”. Dr. Brown’s current academic work is focused on the construction and operation of gender and identity by examining the contemporary socio-cultural practices of Black males during the 90s and 2000s.