



# “If you build it...They will come”

By Jeffrey L. Derevensky Ph.D. – International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

In 1989, the novel *Shoeless Joe* by W.P. Kinsella was adapted into a widely popular American drama/sports film, *Field of Dreams*. The film’s protagonist, Ray Kinsella (played by Kevin Costner), is walking through an Iowa corn field when he hears a voice whisper, “If you build it, he will come” (often misquoted as “If you build it, they will come”). He goes on to build a baseball field,

they do come and the rest is history...or at least an entertaining movie.

There is little doubt that the gambling industry’s mantra is predicated upon the same notion that “If you build it...they will come.” One only has to look at the two major casinos which recently opened in Singapore. Investments of almost \$6 billion each suggest that the casino gurus believe the Asian market remains ripe for significant growth. In April, Macau’s gross gambling revenue hit a record high, jumping a whopping 70% from a year earlier to more than MOP14.1 billion (\$1.76 billion USD), and that’s monthly revenue.

Today’s casinos are powerful lures and attractions. I am mesmerized by their enormous structures, their architecture, and the creative thought which inspires their design. Wandering along the famous Strip in Las Vegas is like touring the world. One minute you can be in old New York and five minutes later you can be in Paris, Venice or inside the pyramids of Egypt.

But what about individuals requiring help? If we build treatment centers will “they” (those in need) come? Inspiring help-seeking behaviors among prob-

lem gamblers takes considerable time, effort, and education. A recent report from Pennsylvania suggests that while the state has collected \$7 million in revenue to help prevent and treat individuals with gambling problems, relatively few individuals are entering state-supported treatment programs.

While we are currently engaged in a collaborative prevention initiative in Pennsylvania and the state has funds for prevention and treatment, other state and council budgets for treatment and prevention are being slashed despite the proliferation and expansion of gambling. With the rising tide of government sanctioned gambling, there is a mounting need for more outreach programs to educate individuals about gambling risks with the ultimate goals being greater public awareness, targeted prevention, and a willingness to seek treatment if needed.

Encouraging individuals to seek help when they have a problem is of utmost importance. There are many erroneous perceptions about gambling, the risks associated with gambling, and issues concerning the identification of problem gambling. As one teenage client of mine remarked, “In

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your waiting room you have a list of items on a poster (based upon the DSM-IV-J) and it suggests that if I endorse four of the 12 items (nine categories) that I may have a gambling problem. I answered 'yes' to all 12 items but I don't think I have a gambling problem. My parents and friends think I have a problem but I don't have a gambling problem." Similar findings were reported in a large-scale study examining the relationship between prevalence of problem gambling (as measured by screening instruments) and perceived severity of problems by youth (Hardoon, Derevensky & Gupta, 2003).

We are only in our infancy in terms of prevention and public awareness. The road ahead is filled with many challenges. Our treatment centers will never be

as luxurious or glamorous as casinos or racinos. Treatment models need to be empirically tested and there remains an enormous task in educating the general public about the prevalence and problems associated with excessive gambling. A recent Canadian national study examining parental perceptions of adolescent risky behaviors revealed that among 13 potentially risky behaviors, gambling was perceived by parents to be the least problematic (Campbell, Derevensky, Meerkamper & Cutajar, in press).

Collectively, we have a lot of work to do to encourage individuals experiencing gambling problems to seek appropriate help. The gambling industry is not a static industry. New technologies, sophisticated advertising and the normalization of

gambling will continue to make our task even more challenging.

I remain cautiously optimistic that with increased prevention and awareness that individuals will recognize the value of treatment and that - if we build it... they will come.

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## Gambling in the North

By Neda Faregh Ph.D. - International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

What is the most fun you can have listening to the radio? It's not the news. It's not the hockey game. It's not even the music. It is RADIO BINGO! That is, at least according to some radio stations. With radio bingo, you no longer have to take the trouble of going all the way out to the bingo hall because this bingo comes to you. It's so simple, radio bingo can even be played while cooking dinner. Just buy your bingo cards when you pick up the groceries then tune into a local radio station and listen for your numbers to be called while dinner is on the stove. If you're lucky, your winnings are only a 1-800 phone

number away. Although radio bingo is available to all audiences, it appears to specifically target the people of First Nations and remote northern communities.

Games and sports are deeply rooted pastimes among many Aboriginal cultures and were played long before the European settlements (Belanger, 2006). Other forms of legal tribal gambling were adopted in Canada during the 1980s and 90s. However, differing levels of remoteness in Aboriginal communities create opportunities for several forms of gambling, including radio bingo. Recent studies have found that 65.2% of a Northern Quebec Cree

community engaged in gambling and that women were significantly more likely to play bingo (56.6 vs. 35.1%) and did so at a higher frequency (once per week or more often) (Gill, 2009).

A recent focus group was held at our Centre to discuss gambling practices in the Aboriginal communities of Northern Quebec. A group of First Nations and Inuit student teachers currently living and teaching at elementary and high schools in Northern Quebec participated. Teaching experience of attendees ranged between 4 to 20 years. The consensus among the group participants was that

there is a lack of variety in the available forms of recreation in their Northern Quebec communities. Gambling was identified as one of the most common forms of entertainment with community members participating in various forms of gambling including bingo, Western and traditional forms of card games, and wagering on the outcome of golf games played on the tundra. They suggested that although summertime allows for a greater variety of activities for children and adults such as camping, egg-hunting for women, and animal hunting for men, the long winters are very conducive to gambling pursuits. The elders usually do not participate in hunting and camping activities but become avid players of bingo and other games. Children are normally not allowed to gamble and instead play video games and also are involved in sports activities. Young boys (6 to 7 years old) often play traditional stick games that involve wagering money. Children are frequently exposed to bingo in schools as it is used for teaching purposes with small prizes such as pencils and stickers. In recent years, children have been known to gamble amongst themselves, playing poker and other card games and

occasionally playing poker with adults. Generally, the parents and the community are aware of these activities but do not sanction them.

The focus group members also discussed a fast-paced Inuit card game, Sinkta, that is played exclusively by women. The game requires a "caller" who sets the rules of the game and changes them as she sees fit. Women callers construct shacks outside their homes and invite other women to play. Sinkta is an inter-generational betting game in that the women callers teach their daughters the rules and help them to become future Sinkta callers. Other common gambling activities are raffles on food-items used as fundraisers for various causes or by retail stores to draw clients. Bingo events are available nightly and well attended and sometimes preferred over other social activities. Radio bingo is favoured by mothers at home but communities have their own mini-lotto and men gamble often in hockey arenas. Poker games are favoured by men who wager large sums or important items such as boats, homes, and snowmobiles. Loto-Quebec lottery tickets as well as scratch-and-win tickets are widely available across retail stores. The remoteness of these communities often neces-

sitates travel to the south where gambling venues are attractions for northern travellers. Every focus group attendee knew someone in their community with a gambling problem but did not know of any available program or treatment for gambling problems. Upon further discussion, some recalled advertisements on posters for toll-free problem gambling hotlines.

The most recent problem gambling prevalence study in Northern Quebec found 8.5% of gamblers were in the problem gambling category (Gill, 2009). Despite high prevalence rates, there is little research available on gambling among Canada's Aboriginals. Given the ubiquitous nature of gambling in Northern Quebec communities, and the higher than average prevalence of gambling problems among First Nations people, it is evident that more prevention and treatment efforts are needed in these communities. In addition, these initiatives should consider the gambling activities particular to these communities.

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# Game Over: The Relationship Between Gambling and Suicidality In Adolescents and Young Adults

By Renee St. Pierre, M.A. – International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

Over the last two decades, both suicide and problem gambling among youth have become recognized as serious public health issues. Canada is reported to have the third highest adolescent suicide rate among the world's leading industrialized countries, exceeding that of the United States and the United Kingdom (Kutcher & Szumilas, 2008). Although Canadian youth suicide rates are observed to have stayed fairly stable in the past decade, suicide continues to be the second leading cause of death among youth in Canada (Langlois & Morrison, 2002). Similarly, while many adolescents participate in gambling activities in a responsible manner, there still remains a small but significant proportion of youth who gamble excessively and experience problems. Of particular concern is that gambling problems can negatively impact multiple facets of young people's lives and the consequences are often long-lasting.

The serious implications of youth suicide and gambling participation have inevitably drawn attention to the importance of identifying their major risk factors and developing prevention and intervention strategies. Yet little is known about the relationship between youth problem gambling and risk for suicide. Intuitively, it seems reasonable to suggest that such a re-

lationship exists. Pathological or problem gambling is generally characterized by impaired control over gambling activities and preoccupation with gambling, typically resulting in negative psychosocial consequences (e.g., increasing financial difficulties, relationship discord, and school or employment-related problems). Prolonged exposure to these psychosocial stressors can potentially lead to severe psychological or emotional consequences. Under these conditions of intense psychological duress, termination of life may be considered as the only viable solution to the individual's difficulties, thereby enhancing the risk for suicide. Despite the plausibility that gambling problems may act as a cumulative risk factor for suicide, only a few studies have examined the relationship of gambling problems with suicidal behaviour in adolescents and young adults. A better understanding of this relationship in youth may ultimately result in the development of more effective prevention and early intervention initiatives.

## Problem Gambling and Suicidality in Adults

Most available literature examining suicidal behaviour in pathological gamblers has focused on adults. Epidemiological data and case studies provided the earliest empirical support for an association between gambling

and suicide. For example, using computerized mortality data covering the period between 1969 and 1991, Phillips, Welty, and Smith (1997) compared the suicide level of both residents and non-residents of major gaming communities (Las Vegas, Reno, Atlantic City) with the suicide level of residents and non-residents of other non-gaming U.S. communities. Suicide level (adult suicides/total adult visitor deaths) was used as the primary outcome measure over the preferred measure of suicide rates (adult suicides per number of adult visitors) because the number of adult visitors was unknown. Phillips and colleagues found that both visitor and resident suicide levels were significantly and unusually elevated in major U.S. gaming communities, with Las Vegas showing the highest levels of visitor and resident suicide. From these findings, they concluded that gambling or a factor closely linked with gambling settings is associated with an abnormally elevated risk of suicide. In another study, Blaszczynski and Farrell (1998) performed psychological autopsies of 44 suicide cases in which gambling was considered a probable contributing factor. While it was not possible to conclude that gambling was a principal contributing risk factor for suicide, nor was it feasible to determine the degree and severity of the individual's gambling

problems, Blaszczynski and Farrell found that co-morbid depression, severe financial debt, relationship difficulties, introversion, and low self-esteem were all risk factors for suicide among gamblers. More methodologically rigorous studies have since been published using large-scale community samples (Newman & Thompson, 2003, 2007). The findings from this research also suggest an association of pathological gambling (past-year and lifetime) with a history of attempted suicide (past-year and lifetime).

### **Problem Gambling and Suicidality in Adolescents and Young Adults**

In the last 10 years, researchers have directed increasing attention to assessing gambling and suicidal behaviour concurrently in large samples of school-aged children and young adults. Early research indicated that the odds of a suicide attempt were significantly elevated for adolescent gamblers, and that there were significant differences in

the number of suicide attempts between adolescent problem gamblers and non-problem gamblers. In their comparison of the relationship between suicidality, depression, and gambling severity in three separate adolescent samples, Nower, Gupta, Blaszczynski, and Derevensky (2004) found that higher levels of depression and gambling severity were predictive of both suicidal ideations and attempts. Nevertheless, as the researchers suggest, it remains unclear what is the precise relationship between gambling-related consequences, depression, and suicidal behaviour in adolescents and young adults. Future research is also needed to delineate the developmental progression of problem gambling, depression, and suicidal behaviour from adolescence to young adulthood.

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## **Bill Clinton-Dick Cheney Appearing in Atlantic City**

This summer, Bill Clinton and Dick Cheney will be appearing at the Atlantic City Hilton Casino Resort. The former U.S. president and former Vice-President are part of a lecture series that will see the likes of Ann Coulter, James Carville, Bill O'Reilly and Glenn Beck hit the casino showroom stage. This lecture series is one step of many to diversify the non-gaming attractions offered by the casino. ◆

## **Sex and the City Slot Machines Number One**

In May 2010, with the release of the latest *Sex and the City* movie, International Game Technology (IGT) announced that their *Sex and the City* Slot machine reached #1 among all stand-alone progressive MegaJackpot games on casino floors. Susan Macke, chief marketing officer at IGT said, "The slot machine is filled with all the fun and fashion we've come to expect from *Sex and the City*, and it's the perfect accessory to any girls' night out at the Casino." ◆

# Social Responsibility in the Gaming Industry

*By Margaret McGee; Introduction by Jeffrey Derevensky Ph.D. – International Centre for Youth Gambling*

*Problems and High-Risk Behaviors*

## Introduction

As the gaming industry has matured, the acceptance that there are problem gamblers and that certain groups remain vulnerable to excessive gambling has gained credibility. No longer does the industry profess that underage youth do not gamble and that all forms of gambling are harm-free. While prevalence data suggest that most individuals gamble in a responsible manner, there still remains a small, identifiable population of youth and adults experiencing significant gambling-related problems. How can gaming operators help minimize the harms associated with excessive gambling? How can these corporations institute a harm reduction strategy for players, the community at large and the environment? In an attempt to address the issues associated with problem gambling, there has been greater recognition and acceptance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices. The Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation (NSGC), among others, has embraced this philosophy. In this article Maggie McGee, former VP of the NSGC, addresses the importance of embracing a CSR approach for the gaming industry.

## Social Responsibility

These days it seems everyone is talking about Corporate Social Responsibility. But, of course, the real power of CSR lies not

in words, but in actions. Today, maybe more than ever, we are suffering from a societal absence of trust. In the wake of high-profile corporate scandals and the collapse of the banking industry the 'little guy' has very clearly gotten the message that some big corporations don't really care about their customers or their communities.

But CSR provides a powerful opportunity to re-establish this trust and make it stronger. The gaming industry in Canada is actually at the forefront of the global CSR movement. For example, several Canadian provinces have been among the first in the world to be certified at the highest level of responsible gambling by the World Lottery Association. But responsible gambling is only one pillar of CSR in the gaming industry. Also called triple-bottom line reporting, CSR doesn't just focus on one aspect of an industry, it takes a more holistic viewpoint by examining the impact on 'people, planet and profit.' So while the old single-bottom line reporting process considered only profit, CSR success is measured more broadly by also considering employees, customers, the people who live in the community, and the company's overall impact on the environment. The message is clear: to be a truly successful company, profit cannot come at the expense of people or the environment.

It was a natural extension for Canadian lottery and gaming corporations to begin focusing on CSR. Because government operates gaming in Canada, the industry has always been open to intense public scrutiny as the people who own the business appropriately feel they should have a say in how it is run. As a result of this scrutiny, combined with moral views about gambling, the running of casinos and lotteries in Canada has always demanded a careful balancing act between generating revenue and minimizing harm. In order to attain the social license to operate, companies and governments have long had to show that through responsible gambling programs and tools they were doing everything they could to minimize the potential for problem gambling. When CSR gained popularity, it was a natural extension for gaming companies to expand their focus to consider the third-bottom line – the planet – and to formalize their CSR processes. As a result, some important lessons have emerged.

- Openness and Accountability are the Cornerstones of CSR—Quite simply, telling people what you are going to do and then informing them of whether you achieved the established goals matters. This process can take the form of an annual CSR or Community Report Card or it can be an ongoing dialogue

on your website. Nothing builds trust faster than telling people the positive news about your accomplishments, along with an honest account of where you fell short. True openness, even when it makes you look bad, builds loyalty and trust with your customers and stakeholders. As well, making a company available to answer questions and provide information to anyone who asks is an important part of CSR. It is not just the media who matters, it is the 'little guy', who at the end of the day actually should be treated like an owner of the company because in Canada's gaming industry he is the owner.

- CSR is not PR – People sometimes lump CSR into public relations which is a sure recipe for failure. If CSR is all talk and no action, it will not do anything to improve a company's success or its relationship with customers. CSR doesn't work when it is simply a glossy layer added to the outer edge of a corporate philosophy. It can, however, become a powerful tool when it is integrated into the fabric and culture of an organization. This integration

involves having each and every employee understand CSR, what it means to their company, and why it is important. To accomplish this goal, tools and processes must be in place to ensure that while employees are making the multitude of daily small and large business decisions they consider the impact not only on profit, but also on people and the environment. For example, senior executives may be compensated not just for reaching revenue targets, but also for goals such as minimizing a company's carbon footprint and successfully preventing underage youth from gambling.

- CSR is an Ongoing Process- CSR is truly the project that never ends as fundamentally it entails constantly setting the bar higher. The 'That's enough, we can stop now' mentality must be discarded. The goal is to make each year better than the last. A corporate CSR framework (documented philosophies, processes and, policies) must reflect a strong commitment to continuous improvement and should involve comparison to other cor-

porations in terms of global best practices. However, the most important comparison is how much better you did in minimizing any negative impacts on people and the environment (while still maintaining a profit) this year, compared to last. This comparison will ensure that the collective vision always remains beyond the horizon with everyone stretching to do better. It also means that even during a recession or downturn, when budget cuts begin, CSR spending must be protected given it is an important investment. Long-term growth and sustainability should never be sacrificed for short-term gain.

If the lessons and principles of CSR continue to become embedded not only in the Canadian gaming industry but in all industries they will go a long way to closing the trust gap and ushering in a new era of customer engagement and loyalty while simultaneously ensuring a harm minimization approach. In doing so, everyone benefits. ♦

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## Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act of 2010

The Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act of 2010, S. 3418, was introduced May 25, 2010 in the U.S. Senate by Sens. Merkley (D-OR) and Johanns (R-NE), co-sponsored by Sens. Brown (D-OH) and Casey (D-PA). This historic milestone is the first-ever Senate bill to minimize gambling addiction. CPG authorizes the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to ad-

dress problem gambling and would provide \$71 million in grants over 5 years to state agencies, non-profits and universities for problem gambling prevention, treatment and research. The companion bill, H.R. 2906 was introduced in the House of Representatives by Reps. Moran (D-VA) and Wolf (R-VA) and currently has 54 additional co-sponsors. ♦

# *iPhone Apps Increase Ability to Gamble on the Go*

*By Lynette Gilbeau B.Ed. – International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors*

The pervasiveness of sports betting has moved into another highly accessible medium with the May 2010 announcement that Betfair's downloadable gambling application (or 'app'), Betfair Client, is now accessible from the Apple iPhone App store. While mobile phone gambling apps are not new to Apple, the U.K.-based Betfair claims to have the first sports betting application accepted by Apple. Until now, betting apps with actual moneyed transactions have not been permitted on the Apple site likely because of uncertainty surrounding the legality of online gambling in the U.S. Bets from the Betfair app can only be placed from the U.K. or Ireland and the app allegedly has GPS tracking technology to identify and verify the customer's location prior to allowing a bet. Additionally, the app incorporates 'Know Your Customer' and age verification protocols. While this app is not available for

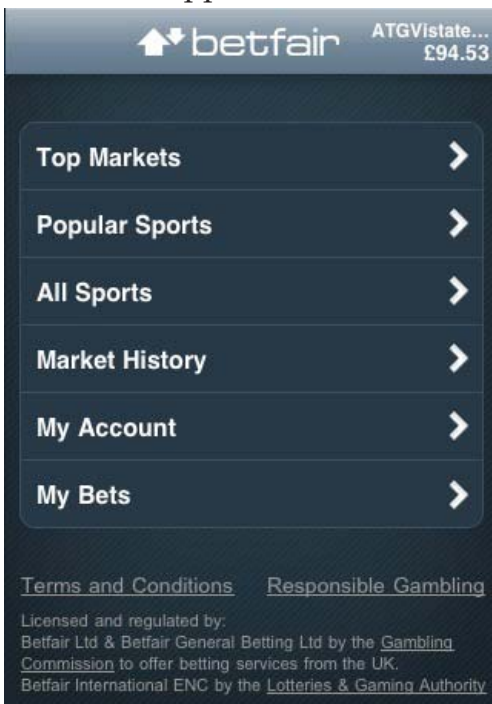


use in North America, it certainly paves the way for future development of similar applications – especially once the U.S. ban is lifted. On some levels, this app is precedent-setting as it ushers in a new technological standard for the expansion of gambling.

In a further example of how the iPhone may potentially be used as a new medium for gambling portability, Apple has recently modified their policies enabling application developers to include "promotional sweepstake or contest functionality provided that You are the sole sponsor of the promotion and that You and Your Application comply with any applicable laws." What impact this change will have on the increased accessibility of contests or sweepstakes is unclear. In the U.S., contests and sweepstakes are regulated on a state-by-state basis which may complicate the usability of this type of application. However, this development still represents another shift in the movement toward mainstream

accessibility of portable moneyed gambling.

Aside from the new sports betting app and the relaxing of developer restrictions, there is an ever burgeoning number of gambling-related apps available for free or for purchase from the Apple store. There are apps for casino-type games, slots, card games, odds calculators, as well as apps that provide gaming tips and strategies enabling users to hone their gaming skills. There are even card counting applications. Many of the simulated gambling games have limited age restrictions for their purchase or download. Some are rated 12+ years, others are 4+ years, and a fewer number are 17+ years. These apps have attracted the attention of Australian Senator Nick Xenophon who feels that "It's irresponsible to allow these applications in the hands of children." These applications realistically simulate real money playing and Xenophon feels that "This is a



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training application for kids to lose real money when they turn 18.”

While these apps are not ‘Live’ or played with real money, they still provide a gambling experience – one that is accessible anytime and anywhere. Research shows that adolescents often gamble to relieve boredom which makes the high availability of these apps

even more concerning. While pundits may argue that no money is actually being wagered, there is still concern that the constant exposure to gambling games is a conduit for desensitization while again highlighting the normalcy of the experience. Gambling is no longer reserved for brick-and-mortar casinos but is a highly accessible, commonplace, glamor-

ized, and condoned behaviour that now permeates all facets of our modern lives. Increased gambling opportunities are coming to a cell phone near you!

Reference:

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/ban-kids-iphone-gambling-apps-xenophon-20100425-tl9s.html> ♦

## 2009 Durand Jacobs Award goes to Allyson Peller

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors is pleased to announce Allyson Peller as the recipient of the 2009 Durand Jacobs Award. Her paper, which was co-authored with Debi LaPlante and Howard Shaffer, was entitled “Parameters for Safer Gambling Behavior: Examining the Empirical Research.” This paper was published in the *Journal of Gambling Studies* in December 2008.

Allyson Peller is currently a doctoral student at the Brandeis University Heller School for Social Policy and Management and a National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Training Fellow. For dissertation research, she is examining the influence of addictive behaviors on psychological response to trauma. While at Brandeis University, she has worked with faculty and research scientists at the Schneider Institutes for Health Policy on an analysis of state policies to address the addiction treatment gap. Prior to starting the doctoral program, she worked as a research associate at the Division on Addictions at Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School where

she collaborated with the research team on several research projects including an evaluation of a self-change gambling toolkit. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Oberlin College and received her Master’s degree in public health from Yale University.

Congratulations Allyson!!

**Abstract:** There have been claims that new gambling technology is hazardous to player health, and that technological interventions can alleviate gambling-related harm. In this paper, we systematically review the empirical research about the nexus between gambling and technology to evaluate the veracity of these claims. We use a public health perspective (i.e., the Epidemiologic Triangle) to organize and present study results (i.e., agent, host, and environment). This review intends to offer insight about emerging technology and identify areas that indicate a need for additional research. Forty-seven studies met our inclusion and exclusion criteria; a review of this body of work shows that attempts to develop and implement safety features for new gambling technology are promising, but

methodologically are rudimentary and limited in scope. Increased attention to the dynamic interaction among host, agent, and environment factors hold potential to advance the field. In addition, improved study methods (e.g., longitudinal analyses of actual betting behavior), and collaboration among policymakers, manufacturers, and researchers can increase understanding of how new gambling technology affects the public health and stimulate new strategies for implementing effective public health interventions.

The complete article can be found in: Peller, A. J. , LaPlante, D. and Shaffer, H. (2008). Parameters for Safer Gambling Behavior: Examining the Empirical Research. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 24, pp. 519-534. ♦



Allyson Peller

# Centre for Gambling Education and Research, Southern Cross University

*Professor Nerilee Hing*

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The Centre for Gambling Education and Research (CGER) is a multi-disciplinary centre which researches various aspects of gambling operations, management, policy and impacts. It has a particular focus on problem gambling, responsible gambling and gambling amongst vulnerable populations, including gaming venue staff, Indigenous Australians, women and youth.

CGER members include specialists in hospitality management (Professor Nerilee Hing, Dr Helen Breen, Shaaron Kapcelovich), clinical psychology (Dr John Haw, Dr Sally Gainsbury), social work (Dr Elaine Nuske), sociology (Dr Louise Holdsworth), Indigenous studies (A/Professor Jeff Nelson, Ashley Gordon), gambling technology and risk management (Steve Toneguzzo), economics (A/Professor Jeremy Buultjens), sport business (Dr Matthew Lamont), employment relations (Dr Grant Cairncross) and education (A/Professor Kurt Seemann).

During the past 12 months, the CGER has completed multiple funded projects (listed below). Additionally, we are in the early planning stages of studies on Internet gambling, workplace stress amongst gaming venue employees, sports sponsorship by gambling operators, women's life stages and gambling, professional gamblers, poker players, and recreational gambling.

## Current and Recent Research Projects

*Gambling Problems, Risks and Consequences in Indigenous Australian Communities: An Innovative Public Health Analysis.* Funded by the Australian Research Council, this qualitative and quantitative study is the first to gather jurisdiction-wide data on various aspects of gambling by Indigenous Australians.

*Gambling and Co-Morbid Disorders,* funded by Gambling Research Australia. This project addresses the questions: "What is the temporal relationship between problem gambling and other co-occurring disorders?" and "Does the presence of a particular morbid condition or a series of co-morbidities predict the development or presence of problem gambling?" Focus groups, expert interviews, survey of problem gamblers in treatment and a longitudinal survey of regular gamblers are included.

*Gamblers at Risk and their Help Seeking Behaviour.* Funded by Gambling Research Australia, this Australian national study seeks to examine formal and informal help-seeking behaviours to assist jurisdictions develop evidence-based policy and program interventions. Gamblers at different stages of change in their gambling behaviour, including regular gamblers, callers to gambling helplines, problem gamblers in

counselling, recovered problem gamblers, Indigenous and ethnic gamblers and family members will participate in this study.

*Indigenous Gambling in a North Queensland Community.* With funding of the Queensland Government, a household census survey of adults in an Indigenous community provided responses related to Indigenous gambling, problem gambling, its socio-demographic, behavioural, perceptual and attitudinal correlates, and help-seeking behaviour.

*Pseudo Underage Gambling Project,* funded by the NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing. Gambling and alcohol purchases were assessed.

*Exploring Indigenous Gambling in Bundjalung Country.* Interviews with 169 Indigenous people, 21 gaming venue managers, and 10 gambling counsellors in six shires in northern NSW Australia were conducted to explore Indigenous gambling and problem gambling. This study funded by Gambling Research Australia examined gambling behaviour, risk and protective factors, consequences and potential remedies to problematic gambling.

*The Influence of Venue Characteristics on a Players' Decision to Attend a Gambling Venue. A national survey,* funded by Gambling Research Australia, using both

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regular gamblers and problem gamblers in treatment sought to understand why gamblers elect to gamble where they do, and whether certain features of different types of premises are more or less likely to attract and/or maintain problem gamblers.

*Assisting Problem Gamblers in Queensland Gaming Venues*, funded by the Queensland Government. This qualitative study conducted 132 interviews to examine how appropriately frontline staff

and customer liaison officers respond to and assist patrons with gambling problems in gaming venues.

*Assisting Problem Gamblers in South Australian Gaming Venues*, funded by the SA Independent Gambling Authority. This largely replicated the Queensland project above, but in South Australia, and also included a survey and interviews with people who had self-barred from gaming venues.

As can be seen, while we are actively engaged in numerous Australian-based research projects, we remain keen to hear from researchers seeking collaboration (email: [nerilee.hing@scu.edu.au](mailto:nerilee.hing@scu.edu.au)). We also invite you to look at our website at <http://cger.scu.edu.au/> where you will find links to several of our published works.



## Obituary

### Michael B. Walker, BSc (Western Australia), BA (Adelaide), PhD (Oxford)



In December 2009, we lost a great colleague and friend with the passing of Michael Walker, School of Psychology and Director of the Sydney University Gambling Treatment Centre, following his long and courageous battle with a terminal illness. Michael swiftly won the affection of his students through his genuine interest and passion for his work and research. His smile, warmth, enthusiasm and dedication to research, teaching and learning were evident to all and he inspired many to continue their study of psychology.

Michael's iconic book, *The Psychology of Gambling*, is one of my most commonly quoted resources, a rare find in such a dynamic field. Michael's determination and pursuit of knowledge and understanding, his logical prowess, and ability to critically evaluate and challenge fundamental concepts and terms resulted in great contributions to the understanding and treatment of problem gambling. His socio-cognitive explanatory model still remains influential in shaping the direction of gambling research.

Throughout his illness, Michael continued to lead his team at the University of Sydney Gambling Treatment Centre. He evaluated many treatment centres and worked tirelessly to improve and evaluate the treatment offered to problem gamblers. He sought to share his results and insights with others, presenting treatment outcome studies at conferences, writing influential publications, and using his skills as a persuasive speaker to discuss, or in some cases argue, his point.

Since his passing many have commented to me on their respect and admiration for Michael, his work, research and contributions to the field. His sense of humour, sincerity, gentle kindness, curiosity and interest are greatly missed. Those who had the pleasure and privilege of knowing and working with Michael will continue to ensure his memory and legacy persevere.

Sally Gainsbury  
Post Doctoral Research Fellow  
Centre for Gambling Education & Research  
Southern Cross University  
Associate Editor  
International Gambling Studies

*The staff at the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors extend their deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Michael Walker.*

# Recent publications and presentations

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## REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

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Campbell, C., Derevensky, J., Meerkamper, E. & Cutajar, J. (in press). Parents' perceptions of adolescent gambling: A Canadian national study. *Journal of Gambling Issues*.

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Shead, N. W., Derevensky, J. & Meerkamper, E. (in press). Your mother should know: A comparison of maternal and paternal attitudes and behaviors related to gambling among their adolescent children. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*.

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Brezing, C., Derevensky, J., & Potenza, M. (2010) Non-Substance addictive behaviours in youth: Pathological gambling and problematic Internet use. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 19, 625-641.

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Derevensky, J., Shek, D., & Merrick, J. (2010). Youth gambling. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 22, 1-2.

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Derevensky, J., Sklar, A., Gupta, R., & Messerlian, C. (2010). An empirical study examining the impact of gambling advertisements on adolescent gambling attitudes and behaviors. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 8, 21-34.

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Shead, N.W., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (2010). Risk and protective factors associated with youth problem gambling. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 22, 39-58.

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Sklar, A., Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. (2010). Binge gambling behaviors reported by youth in a residential drug treatment setting: A qualitative investigation. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 22, 153-162.

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Volberg, R., Gupta, R., Griffiths, M., Olason, D., & Delfabbro, P. (2010). An international perspective on youth problem gambling. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 22, 39-58.

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## INVITED PRESENTATIONS

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Derevensky, J. (2010). Sports wagering on college campuses: Should we be concerned? Invited address presented at Holy Cross, Mass., April.

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Derevensky, J. (2010). Understanding youth gambling: From research to prevention. Address presented at the CHOICES Adolescent Treatment Program, IWK Health Centre (Mental Health and Addictions unit), Halifax, April.

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Derevensky, J. (2010). Youth gambling: Research, issues, prevention and treatment options. Mississippi Council on Problem Gambling annual training workshop. Madison, Mississippi, April.

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Gupta, R. (2010). Uncovering the different subtypes of Problem Gamblers: An empirical testing of the Pathways Model and its clinical implications. Gambling Training Summit, Sacramento, California, March.

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## BOOK CHAPTERS

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Derevensky, J., Gupta, R., & Csiernik, R. (2010). Problem gambling: Current knowledge and clinical perspectives. In R. Csiernik & W. Rowe (Eds.). *Responding to the oppression of addiction: Canadian social work perspectives, Second edition*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 359-378.

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## RESEARCH REPORTS

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Sklar, A., Derevensky, J. & Gupta, R. (2010). *Selling the Game: A Teen-Focused Analysis of Gambling Advertisements*. Report prepared for the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 26 pp. ◆

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## News from the Centre...

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### Another Centre Baby

Congratulations to Amy Taylor and her husband Jonathan Morton on the birth of their beautiful baby Owen Wallace Morton. The baby was born on April 9th weighing 8Lbs 10oz. Owen is growing fast and keeping his parents busy!



### Doctoral Fellowship

Congratulations to Jessica McBride who has been awarded a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship.

### Farewell

The Centre says farewell to Cintia Quiroga, one of our Post Doctoral Fellows, who has left the Centre to take up residence in Ottawa. We wish her all the best of luck.

### Dr. Meredith Gillespie

We are please to report that on June 15, Meredith Gillespie successfully defended her doctoral dissertation entitled: Youth Gambling: Exploring the Relationships Between Impulsivity, Depression, Outcome Expectancies and Gambling Involvement. We are all proud of her many accomplishments and wish her every success. ◆

## Upcoming Events

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- **North American Gaming Regulators Association**  
June 26-30, 2010 - Renaissance Harbourside Hotel, Vancouver, B.C
  - **Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse**  
July 28-30, 2010 - Kansas City, Texas, USA
  - **8th European Conference on Gambling Studies and Policy Issues**  
September 14-17, 2010 - Vienna, Austria
  - **Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation's Responsible Gambling Conference**  
October 4-5, 2010 - World Trade and Convention Centre, Halifax, Nova Scotia
  - **National Association of Gambling Studies Australia 20th Annual Conference**  
December 1-3, 2010 - Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia
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## YGI Newsletter

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