The Society for the Study of Gambling Newsletter

July 1994, Number 24

The Editor welcomes unsolicited manuscripts, correspondence, book reviews and other items which are of interest to SSG members. Books and book reviews should be sent to the editor.

The Society holds regular meetings twice a year in London. Further details are available from the Honorary Secretary.

The Society for the Study of Gambling was formed in 1977 to provide a forum for those concerned with research into gambling, to promote its scientific study especially as far as the psychological, social and economic aspects are concerned, and to inform the public about these matters.

The membership of the Society is drawn from a wide circle of people who have an interest in various aspects of gambling. They range from social workers and psychiatrists who deal with 'compulsive gamblers' to members of the commercial gambling industry. It is a condition of the Society that there should be freedom of opinion and practice among its members, so that the Society does not take any particular stance in relation to gambling.

Papers are reproduced in the Newsletter as a record of the Society's meeting, and/or at the invitation of the editor, and are not intended as an alternative to publication in a learned journal. Any of the standard reference systems is acceptable.

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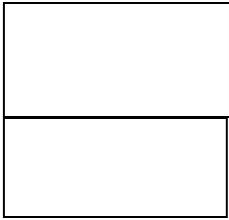
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF GAMBLING

The European Association of Gambling aims to increase the level of dialogue between members representing various aspects of gambling. It will provide a forum for the systematic study, discussion and dissemination of knowledge about all matters relating to the study of gambling in Europe. Such a forum would promote the comparative study of:

*Historical, economical, mathematical, social and psychological, aspects of gambling;

*development, execution and evaluation of the regulation of gambling;

*ethical marketing and management of gambling opportunities;

*understanding of the development of excessive gambling and the provision of prevention and treatment programmes

The EASG will avoid taking a communal view of the association about any specific issue relating to gambling.

Benefits of Membership of EASG

* Access to the largest ever network of information on all aspects of gambling in Europe via the secretariat which is based at the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands.
* Issues of the EASG Newsletter highlighting new trends, policies, events, publications.
*Discounts on registration fees of conferences organised by the EASG.
* Discount on publications of the EASG.

Membership is open to academics, researchers, regulating authorities, members of the gaming industry, treatment professionals and other interested parties, both within Europe and outside of Europe, who are interested in the aims of the association.

Constitution

A copy of the constitution of EASG is available in the English language. The headlines are available in French, German, and Spanish.
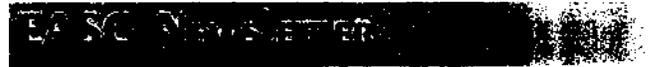
EASG Newsletter

Members of the EASG get a free subscription to the EASG-Newsletter. This Newsletter highlights all major developments in Europe on the field of gambling and commercial gaming e.g. results of (scientific) studies, important journal and magazine articles, new jurisprudence, changes in national gambling law. The EASG-Newsletter will be available in English, French, German and Spanish.

European Conference

The first European Conference on gambling and policy issues - which will focus on all aspects of gambling behaviour, policies and studies in Europe. This will be held during August 1995 in the ancient and beautiful St. John's College, University of Cambridge. There will be direct communication through simultaneous translation into four languages, English, German, and Spanish and French.

EDITORIAL: The Future of Gambling in the Technological Revolution

Mark Griffiths

Psychology Department, University of Plymouth

In my editorial a year ago (Volume 22) I wrote about *Betty*, a touch sensitive screen which is currently under trial at some betting shops and allows punters to compile bets of any complexity. *Betty* the betting terminal was described as the height of bookmaking technology ("Nintendo for adults" as *The Independent* stated) and reported to be very user-friendly. When the bet is complete, *Betty* takes your money, prints out your slip and even wishes you luck! The advantages for the shop manager are the speed and accuracy of the settling system, a computerised field-book which shows total liabilities on all events, and the elimination of much of the potential for fraud by both customers and staff. More general management information is also efficiently organised. Since these initial reports it appears that the technological revolution is making itself known in other areas of the gambling industry.

For instance, a company called *Betpoint* (based in Waterlooville, Hampshire) are bringing the betting shop into your own living room with a computer programme link which will potentially allow millions of punters to bet from their own home. By simply connecting a personal computer to your telephone line and filling out your credit or debit card details, *Betpoint* will take your bets. According to newspaper reports, the company will provide graphic coverage of all race meetings and other sporting events with up-to-the-minute odds. After choosing a bet from the menu of options, the gambler waits for the most favourable odds to come onto screen and, by pushing a button, places a bet. The stakes are instantly taken from your bank account and winnings are credited as soon as the race is over. The software package costs in the region of £20. The system has been set up by brothers Steven and Chris Latter who have raised more than £1 million and spent six years developing the system. The developers believe there will be a big potential market for their service as there are more than nine million computer users in the UK. Basically, anyone with a computer and a modem (the device that connects the computer to the phone) can effectively have a betting shop on their desk or at home. It is envisaged that the system will be upgraded to incorporate live television coverage of race meetings and other sports events over phone lines so computer users can see the action without a television. Whether *Betpoint's* service threatens the business prospects of the established bookmaking chains remains to be seen.

Picking the winners themselves may be easier with a new computer turf guide. There is now a sophisticated software program available for the high-tech punter who has the use of a personal computer. The *Computer Form Book* is a series of computer discs and a program which is contain a database with all the details of all the last two season's horses, trainers and jockeys. It also contains past races' ratings, form-lines, weights, starting prices and breeding information. It has existed in various forms since 1990 but the latest version is more sophisticated and easier to use than the previous ones. Colour bar-graphs and pie charts allow easy illustration of trends and habits - highly useful information for working out the right bet. The idea of the program (like a conventional form book) is to be able to spot the horses on form and those best suited to the tracks on which they are able to race. The program enables enthusiasts to handicap horses quickly; weights, distances, allowances and weight-for-age calculations are automatically assessed for every runner in a race. To keep the database up to date, the *Computer Form Book* comes as a subscription package costing about £300 a season.

The program will run on most personal computers although it performs best on a 486 machine with colour screen and at least 30 Mb of free hard disc space. Update discs are then sent by post each week detailing all the latest results and races to fine tune its predictive analysis. Like *Betpoint* (above), the program designers (*OEM Computer Systems* based in Rugby, Warwickshire) also provide the latest information "on-line" using a modem and telephone connection.

Further to this, two new systems are about to make the going better for bookmakers. *Nexus* from *SIS* will enliven betting shops and *Mobile Bookie* from *A Bet A Technology* will make it easier for punters to bet at the trackside. For the last five years, *SIS* has provided most of the country's 9800 betting shops with video walls. The shops receive, by satellite, live action from race meetings. They also receive teletext information about the runners, riders and results. Bach video wall has been managed by a 15 year old microprocessor (a *Zilog Z80*). The new *Nexus* screens have a much superior processor (*Intel 486*) which give the screens more exciting displays of information. Text will no longer look like it is made of *Lego*. It has also been provided with a built in "frame-grabber" so that a snapshot of the race can be displayed as a still picture on another screen. Punters are thus given the chance to analyse the crucial moment their horse claimed victory at a photo-finish. For people who prefer to bet at the trackside, *A Bet A Technology* have produced the *Mobile Bookie*, a *Toshiba PenPad* notepad computer linked to a bookmaker's central computer. It will eliminate the need to queue to place a bet. Hostesses equipped with the *PenPad* will roam through the restaurants and around the grandstand, accepting bets as they go. The punter then asks the odds, the *PenPad* receives the data from the main computer and displays it. The hostess accepts the bet, a portable printer produces a betting slip and the transaction is radioed back to the main computer.

The introduction of new technology is not only restricted to the race track. Bingo halls are introducing touch screen computers to automate the game and to boost its image. *Gala Clubs*, the UK's second largest bingo operator with 140 venues has installed a system in a club in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, for a six month trial. The system has 160 touch-screen terminals and is based on the *Starship Club* in Vancouver, Canada, where they are already widely selected in preference to the paper-based game. In the new digital bingo, customers purchase "books" in the normal way but, rather than receiving standard paper books, they are simply given a receipt. They then find a terminal and log in their receipt number, together with their personal identification number. When the bingo-caller announces the start of the game, the books automatically appear on the screen. To mark the numbers the player needs only touch the appropriate ticket on the screen.

The system was originally devised by Canada's *British Columbia Lottery Corporation* but has been modified for Gala. It can be connected to existing computer networks, enabling *Gala* outlets to join together for regional games for bigger stakes. Moves are also afoot to tie up with bingo's biggest game, the £50,000 national game, which links more than 650 clubs nationwide. *Gala* believes its digital bingo system could pave the way to the world's first totally electronic bingo venue in which even the caller is replaced by an electronic equivalent.

Touch-screen bingo is not merely a case of bringing bingo up to date. More than three million people play bingo regularly, but restrictions are imposed on advertising so that people are not enticed to gamble, making it difficult for the bingo firms to expand the marketplace. However, digital bingo opens up other commercial possibilities. *Gala* is set to add a waitress-call button to the terminals, tempting players to order their drinks at the touch of a screen. *Gala's* vision

is shared by others in the industry as many people now think that in the long term, this type of technology will be commonplace.

As can be seen from the outline above, the field of gambling is not immune to the technological revolution taking place elsewhere in other fields. These new technologies will provide many people with their first exposure to the world of gambling and could be argued to be more enticing than previous non-technological incarnations. The long term impact of the technological revolution in the gambling field cannot yet be assessed but I like other academics studying the impact of gambling on people's everyday lives will be monitoring the situation with great interest.

To finish and to change the focus of this editorial completely, I would just like to add that this current issue of the SSG Newsletter contains articles mainly about fruit machines and amusement arcades. I would like to say that this state of affairs was not deliberate but merely represented what I had been sent in. I hope that the next issue will contain a wider spectrum of gambling issues and interests.

PLAYING THE GAME

Bernice Mayne

West Glamorgan Council for Voluntary Service

When I was asked to present this paper, my first reaction was that it would not be possible to present a reasonable overview of the research in the time allotted. So I decided that I would not present data relating to eleven 16 year olds and concentrate on areas where less work had been done, and that this may be of more interest to people. Finally, I decided that I would concentrate on the section related to problem gamblers, and pull in some data from other areas of the study.

I felt that since my background was one of addiction counsellor/trainer with some research experience in primary prevention before the study, and I continue to work with problem gamblers of all ages, it would be useful to present a piece of work from a practitioners perspective. I also have some personal experience as my father was a professional gambler.

"Playing the Game" is a piece of research undertaken within the City of Swansea in response to long standing concerns expressed about young people in the city.

The remit of the research was to study the size and scope of machine use in the city. The Swansea Juvenile Gambling Project interviewed 2000 people within the city, in order to gain a clear picture of attitudes, perceptions and behaviours related to machine playing and gambling. The emphasis being on young people between the ages of six and 18 years.

No hypothesis was formed linking gambling and machine playing to any deviant activity, and open questions were used as extensively as possible. The aims of the research were:

1. to monitor and evaluate the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of 200 children aged between six and 11 years.

2. to monitor and evaluate the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of a random sample of 1000 of the city population aged from under 16 to over 50 years of age.

3. to monitor and evaluate the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of 736 children aged between 11 and 18 years.

4. to undertake a small comparison study between inner and outer city schools of 50 children aged 13 and 14 years.

5. to examine attitudes and behaviours of problem gamblers within the existing Gamblers Support Group, of all ages, who experienced a range of gambling problems.

The Views and Perspectives of Problem Gamblers of All Ages

This final part of the research programme addressed the views, perspectives, and experiences of people with personal experience of actual problem gambling. The findings were drawn from people who attended Gamblers Support Group facilitated by the Project researchers, over a period of two and a half years. The ages of those attending ranged from 12 to 65 years, of both sexes.

A total of four review sessions were facilitated during the Project's life with different group

members of problem gamblers. In addition to the information from the problem gamblers themselves, data were also gained from relatives who attended the group. The major questions asked and collated were as follows:

1. Did they know anything about gambling problems before they started game playing?

2. Did they feel that if more information had been made available to them at the time, they would have made different choices?

3. What sort of information should be provided and in what way should it be presented, and what would be the best means of access to such information be?

4. What types of common problems did they experience and what types of things did they find helpful?

5. What range of information world be required from a Support Group?

6. What sort of ongoing support mechanisms would they find helpful?

7. How did they view their part in any support programme in terms of self-responsibility?

8. What did they expect from group facilitators?

The sessions were managed over a 90 minute group exercise using `brainstorming' and `dyad' techniques. Each question was asked within the Group and the responses were collated by researchers.

Perceptions, Attitudes and Behaviours of Problem Gamblers

Knowledge of gambling problems before their own game playing began

Consumers had little knowledge of gambling problems before they started game playing. They experienced either very negative attitudes i.e. gambling was bad, and they should be able to stop with will power alone, or that gambling did not create problems for anyone and was a completely harmless activity. These attitudes were based largely on personal experiences within the family and peer groups. They did not allow for the possibility of being able to examine whether or not a problem existed, and to decide on appropriate strategies to address that problem with help and support.

However, most group members were aware of other game players who did have problems. 70% of the general public in the random attitudinal survey knew of someone with a problem. This would also indicate that the problem was severe enough for someone else to notice. This awareness rose from observations of behaviour and discussion with others who had observed this. Other observers could be, other gamblers, arcade owners, significant others or friends and acquaintances.

Would consumers have made different choices if more information was available to them at the time?

It was strongly felt that more information would have resulted in very different choices. This was bome out by 88% of the general public who wanted more information. It is significant that out of the 96 under 16 year olds in the attitudinal survey, 87 wanted more information. This opinion was very much related to the importance of early intervention. When asked what kind of help should be given, 21% of the general public wanted information targeted at

schools, colleges and youth clubs. Group members felt that if information had been available, before problems had escalated, many problems resulting from the gambling behaviour would not have existed. They felt it would than have been easier to take action and there would be fewer problems to tackle in addition to working on the gambling problem. 64.5% of the general public also wanted health promotion type information of the type they associated with alcohol, smoking and drug campaigns.

The range of information presentation and access

Many different interventions were identified by the group as essential:

1. They wanted more information related to services and for this information to be freely available at many outlets e.g. GP surgeries, hospitals, outpatients, arcades, telephone directories, local media and areas of help such as CABs. They felt information targeted at young people was essential, through schools, youth clubs and through the media, particularly television (e.g. soap operas).

2. A range of written information providing options for intervention. Available as (1).

3. The continuance of the Gamblers Support Group.

4. A facility for those game players who were problem-free to help others through co counselling and befriending.

5. Contact telephone numbers for support from other group members or problem-free former group members.

6. The opportunity for individual and family intervention and support where required. 43% of the general public also saw the need for a counselling and advice service. More publicity to increase awareness of the harmful aspects of machine playing and gambling behaviour.

7. More understanding of the problem and appropriate referral from Primary Care Workers such as GPs, social workers etc.

Group members felt that in order for access to be as wide as possible, information should be available as widely as possible in all public places and not simply in areas of help and support. This would also increase access to early intervention and allow information to be accessed at any stage.

Members discussed some of the problems experienced widely in the group

There are two quotes from the schools survey of 11 to 18 year olds that show that young people have an understanding of gambling and money problems:

> *"They eat your money and you can get carried away with them."*
> *"Because you spend so much money you don't have what you need to live."*

Debt

Some group members had incurred debts of over £40,000, others had lost homes and possessions through debt. 32% of the public surveyed identified financial problems as a major problem related to gambling. Less serious debts were also experienced - they ranged from money owed to family members and friends, to debts to other agencies. It was particularly worrying to find that some Finance Companies were chasing group members to

take out further loans, when they were aware that current debts had been incurred through gambling.

Very young group members often incurred serious debts and members often went to great lengths to avoid being discovered, until it was impossible to maintain secrecy. It was particularly worrying to observe that 19% of the 11 - 18 year old group used their pocket money to play. It was also of concern that almost 30% of young children between the ages of 6 - 11 years were using their pocket money to play machines. Most members had incurred debts, and those who had not often spent all their savings and were on the verge of debt when seeking help.

Legal Problems

Group members experienced a number of legal problems. Almost all of these were related to finding money to play and attempting to pay off debts. Court summonses for non-payment of rent, catalogue debts, fuel debts and debt to Finance Companies and banks were common. 22% of the general public perceived delinquency and crime to be a consequence of gambling.

The issue of theft was related to several areas. Stealing money from organisations, friends and family, and stealing possessions, sometimes went unpunished, but many had been prosecuted and had lost jobs. Some had been in prison - some more than once.

Members also experienced trouble with the law for acts of aggression, sometimes towards family and friends but also for disturbing the peace through fighting. A significant number had been cautioned for hitting and shaking Amusement with Prizes machines.

There were many incidences of theft that did not result in prosecutions, but would have done so if help had not been accessed and theft had continued. These included theft from the workplace and areas of leisure activity, in addition to family and friends.

Some young people gave ambiguous responses as to where money to play had come from. 43% of the 11 - 18 year olds said they had `found it' or it was `mother's money' or `from the house'. There was no direct question in either survey asking whether they had taken or stolen money.

Homelessness

Members had been made homeless for a number of reasons that related to gambling behaviour. Some had come close to homelessness before receiving help. Eviction for non-payment of rent or mortgage payments. Having to move before eviction because no money was available to pay for housing costs because of gambling. Members also had to leave their homes because of family and relationship problems. Sometimes problems at home resulted in gambling as an escape, and gambling compounded the problems and created new ones, resulting in loss of the home. Behaviour related to gambling resulted in families, partners and friends finding it impossible to continue to live with them. Young gamblers had been known to run away from home because of family problems compounded by their gambling.

Communication Problems

Gambling itself often takes priority over other areas of life and this can make communication very difficult. People will often use gambling as an escape from communication, and the activity then makes communicating even more difficult.

Problem gamblers have experienced restlessness when not engaged directly in gambling

activity. Thinking about playing and finding money to play can take up time and attention that may normally be given to family and friends. Secrecy about activities they do not or cannot share causes further problems. Guilt can encourage problem gamblers to push relationship problems to the back of their minds and compartmentalize their lives. Solutions can be difficult to envisage making polarization of gambling and relationship more and more evident and difficult to deal with.

Dependency

> *"They keep on making you play and sometimes you can't stop."* (Boy 12 years - video games; 11 - 18 survey)
> *"You can become addicted like drugs."* (Attitudinal Survey)

Gambling is a dependency. Although no substance is ingested the behaviour of immediate gratification (i.e. doing something that makes one feel better immediately, even if the consequences make one feel bad, and may create problems), is the same as any dependency. With gambling it is often adrenalin itself that becomes the substance.

Problem gamblers can become locked into a pattern of feeling very good and then very bad in a very short time. These emotional highs and lows, coupled with the appetitive behaviour, create problems that are very difficult to tackle without help and support.

All group members felt `addicted' to gambling and most had attempted to stop, simply by not gambling, but had found that this was too difficult to maintain for any length of time. All made decisions at some time that their playing would be controlled either by time or finances, and had been unable to do so for any length of time, and for some, not at all.

They all felt that gambling was causing problems in relationships, social life, working life, finances or all four areas. They felt that they were spending money and time in a way that affected themselves and other people.

Members felt that initially gambling could help them forget other problems, but in fact it caused more problems and made their lives far more difficult to manage. It was often able to make them feel better for a while. However, they began to realise that gambling was causing most of the problems directly or indirectly. The good feelings were becoming outweighed by problems.

Many members were dependent on only one form of gambling, but some were dependent on several. There was a risk of switching dependencies to other forms of behaviour such as alcohol and drug use. "You can become addicted like drugs" - a comment from the Attitudinal Survey. 27% of the general public saw dependency as a consequence from excessive gambling and machine play. This occurred because addictive behaviour had become established through game playing. These issues had to be tackled and managed through various strategies in the group.

Loneliness

"You become isolated and tell lies" (Attitudinal Survey).

Loneliness was identified as a problem. This was often a causal factor in gambling, but was also a result of gambling. Members felt that gambling gave comfort when lonely. They spoke of being in a "bubble" where they could not be touched, but the relationship with gambling often excluded others and could push other relationships away until gambling was the main relationship in the person's life. Many members saw playing alone as the beginning of their

own problem gambling. This would indicate that the 32% of 11 - 14 year olds who played alone may be moving into areas of problem use.

Where there were relationships, increasing isolation and keeping a large part of their life separate, created loneliness within relationships, not only for the gambler but for those sharing the gambler's life. Some members had relationships with no-one other than gambling and other gamblers and this loneliness led to more isolation through their game playing.

Relationship Breakdown

Many people who attended the Gamblers Support Group did not have relationships. Those who did were generally experiencing severe problems. Significant others in the gambler's life were encouraged to attend the Support Group if they wished, and their comments are reflected here.

Many couples did choose to work together on the gambling problems. It is important to note that even when both parties had an ultimate goal of abstinence, or controlled gambling, each one had their own separate needs to deal with that were not always compatible with joint goals.

Partners often felt anger and resentment that they had experienced problems related to someone else's gambling and were now needed to be supportive and address problems that they may not have been "informed of', such as debts, poverty and anger of friends and family. Gamblers often found it difficult to share feelings that had been kept secret for years. They were sometimes ashamed of past acts.

Partners were likely to find out the extent of gambling problems through some sort of crisis, such as problems at work coming to a head. This could make it particularly difficult to look positively at a future life together.

Group members often presented for help after partners had given some form of ultimatum. i.e. that the relationship was only likely to have a chance if they received help and worked at overcoming the problem. Therefore some gamblers wanted to save the relationship but had not made the decision and could not visualise life without gambling.

Many members reported that they had been influenced by family members when young. This was reflected in the experiences of the 6 - 11 year olds. One child identified nine family members within his family who played. 36.5% identified fathers - 16% were boys and 20% were girls.

Many children (particularly girls) said "when Daddy comes from away". This could indicate a pattern of absent fathers taking their daughters to amusement arcades on access visits.

Problem gamblers felt that having support made a great deal of difference to their progress but many of the issues illustrated needed to be worked through to enable people to rebuild their relationships.

Anxiety and Depression

Gambling behaviour is based on the creation of negative stress, which sends a message of needing to continue to play in order to feel better. It then creates further stress in chasing losses, beating the system and responding to stimulation. Mood swings from anxiety to depression are common when playing and playing very frequently is a large part of many gamblers lives. Mood swings then become part of the way people feel much of the time. It is

common for group members to report feeling very flat, depressed and bored much of the time and very anxious and/or excited for the remainder.

Relearning the ups and downs of emotional life that does not swing from one extreme to another is a difficult task. Group members have found it helpful to recharge their adrenalin into areas that are more helpful to their lives, such as work or leisure activity. To feel comfortable with quiet times and use them for emotional nurturing and to get in touch with their feelings.

"You get moody and have difficulty getting on with people". (Attitudinal Survey).

Loss - Bereavement

Gambling has often been the major relationship in people's lives. No matter how negative this may appear when problems related to gambling are recognised, a great feeling of loss can occur when stopping the activity and even when contemplating stopping.

Loss is very significant when steps are taken to stop or control gambling. Group members felt it very helpful to recognise that the feeling of loss is valid and to share it with other people. Many group members, whose gambling behaviour occurred later in life, when not linked to family and peer group influences, found that gambling gave comfort at a time of loss.

The examples of loss and bereavement described varied greatly. Some members experienced multiple losses that occurred close together. Loss of parents, partners, pets, careers, loss of relationships through breakdown and loss of homes were some of the losses identified by group members. Sometimes gambling was part of the grieving process and sometimes it replaced grieving. Group members felt that initially it had helped but ultimately stopped growth. It was possible to get into a cycle of gambling to deal with loss and then experience more loss when the gambling stops. The issue that members examined here was that grieving had not occurred - game playing had replaced it and stopped the process. Issues related to the grief were discussed in a safe and confidential manner and support structures for the group members were examined.

Feeling Worthless

Many group members reported a feeling of worthlessness. This feeling often did not subside for some time after establishing some control over the problem. Some members had seriously contemplated suicide, including younger members. Some members had attempted suicide and some more than once.

Feelings of worthlessness were related to several major areas. Amounts of money spent, where it was felt money should go and who should benefit. Feeling that behaviour had been responsible for difficulties experienced by others close to the gambler and feeling that behaviour had been destructive both to others and oneself and had stunted growth.

Lies may have been told and often it was felt both by the gambler and the person supporting them that a web of deceit had been built up. This often made all the parties feel alienated. Much guilt was expressed for the effect of gambling behaviour on the lives of others. Guilt was also expressed for the selfishness that can be part of gambling which can take priority over other areas of life.

Sometimes the gambler was told that they were a worthless member of the family. This was sometimes the case particularly with young group members. Often there were many family problems that were not looked at by the family. Relationships within the family could

prompt the person to look for escape in game playing behaviour and this could lead to further problem behaviour that compounded the family view that the gambler was the reason for all problems within the family. Also beating out the view the gambler themselves believed that they were indeed worthless and the family were right.

When taking control over the problem, it was important that people felt they deserved help and support. It was also important, to recognise that taking responsibility for the consequences of their behaviour, was not the same as feeling unworthy and guilty for the rest of their lives. This would not enable them to make lasting changes that would benefit their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

Social Life

> *"They're fun to play, something to do when your in town, they're better than walking round town." (Boy 14 years - video and amusement with prizes machine; 11 - 18 year old survey).*

For many group members social life was entirely taken up by gambling and game playing. Lone players often felt that gambling took the place of companions. Lonely people sometimes took comfort in gambling and the company of arcade workers, betting shop staff and bingo staff. These professionals within the industry were seen as safe by game players, as they were aware that no expectations or judgements existed within the relationship. This added to the general feeling that game playing was an island of safety, even after problems had been identified.

Many members only socialised with other gamblers. They realised that conversation revolved largely around gambling. Family members were sometimes involved in the game playing culture. Relaxation time at home was often gambling related - e.g. reading newspapers, watching television and playing cards.

A choice presented itself to group members between cutting off from friends and maintaining the same social life without gambling, or with controlled gambling. This was a difficult choice to make and gamblers made this choice according to their individual circumstances. Sometimes arriving at a compromise between the two choices, which they may then change as they gain more control over the problem and their own needs changed.

Some were lucky enough to have friends who were not gamblers, but many created a new social life for themselves. This sometimes included activities that they had enjoyed in the past, sometimes members explored completely new activities. Members often enjoyed experimenting and for many members social life included partners for the first time.

Filling the Holes in Their Lives

Many group members had attempted to control their gambling before, but most had simply stopped and had nothing to put in the place of gambling. They had felt that self-control was all that was necessary and felt that they had failed because self-control alone had not worked. Group members reassessed the situation and looked at what gambling had given them in their lives. No matter how destructive the gambling appeared to be at this stage, their needs were valid and needed to be addressed. It was common for more than one need to exist. Some examples of what game playing had given are:

EXCITEMENT - If gambling gave a sense of excitement, group members looked at other ways in which that need could be fulfilled, such as through work achievements, through physical and other activities and through relationships. Strategies were discussed to harness

their adrenalin and their energies.

SPACE TO THEMSELVES - If gambling gave space, entitlement to time alone was looked at. Other demands and their own needs were addressed also. There was discussion related to what they see as an appropriate amount of space because many members found it difficult to assess this after spending so much time game playing.

ESCAPE - If gambling had been a means of escape, then coping strategies were looked at. What were people needing to escape from? The right to escape was examined and other activities that could be used as escape were discussed e.g. cinema, music, television.

The amount of time appropriate for escape time was discussed. As stated before many game players found this difficult to assess when much time had been spent in escape, either playing or planning to play. Group members recognised the importance of not filling the hole with other dependency behaviour, such as alcohol and drug use. It was seen that the activity was the same except that gambling was replaced. This did not address the dependency behaviour, fill the hole or broaden choices. Some members did have a phase of other dependency behaviour. This was addressed by looking at widening life choices and making sure that needs were addressed.

Range of information group members required from a support group

Group members felt that knowing what experiences other members had was very helpful and knowing what strategies had helped them. They also found it helpful to look at how they saw their problem, what action they felt able to take and what specific issues they felt related to themselves and to the circumstances surrounding their problem. They believed that working in a client-centred way and not having rules and dogma imposed on them, helped empower them to own their problem. They also appreciated appropriate and non-aggressive confrontation which helped them to be honest and to focus.

There were a number of issues that were addressed when helping group members to focus on the help they needed. There were specific areas that helped to tackle the problem and make it more manageable. They required information from the group members which enabled the group to look at information and help required. They were:

LOOKING AT - why the member may want to change their behaviour? How would life be different if they could stop or control their gambling?

LOOKING AT - what action needed to be taken and how to begin to establish order, once the decision to take action was made?, e.g. making a list of debts and looking at means of repayment. Informing those close to them who may need to be informed about the problems and looking at what support may be available.

LOOKING AT - dangers and triggers to their behaviour, e.g. time of day, feelings, situations, availability of money and influences of different people.

LOOKING AT - how to avoid difficult situations, e.g. physically keeping away from gambling venues that could practically be avoided. Planning ahead to do something else at difficult times - such as significant race meetings or weekend machine play or not spending time with people who are heavy gamblers.

LOOKING AT - how to cope with difficult situations, e.g. pay day when money would usually be spent on gambling, being in a situation that cannot be avoided where gambling is taking place or being talked about.

LOOKING AT - dealing with a strong urge to gamble, e.g. when feeling anxious, depressed, disappointed and/or wanting to get away from problems, a time when gambling would normally have taken place or an immediate need that is unexpected and difficult to deal with.

Ways of taking the mind off gambling

The things that problem gamblers said could be done without planning that are useful when coping with an urge to gamble, can include running, gardening, making oneself feel good by giving self-rewards, such as magazines, books, tapes, clothes, make-up, a food treat, listening to music, relaxing in a bath, playing an instrument or being close to a loved one.

Sharing feelings and fears, whether with someone close, someone who has experienced the same problems, or a professional. Someone who will understand - ideally a range of people who may be able to be contacted easily.

Thinking about why the decision was made to stop, as this helps to boost motivation at times when it is low. Thinking about alternatives to gambling.

Group members looked at many alternatives, either past activities or things they would like to do. Members recognised that alternatives form an important part in filling the hole. They recognise that alternatives were needed not only to fill empty time, but also must be able to give the gambler many things that gambling had given, such as excitement, relaxation and social life. Strategies for changing social life were an important factor in the information needed from the group. This was provided by experiences of others with input from facilitators in linking needs.

Group members identified a number of tools that would be helpful in conjunction with the strategies identified, such as manuals, check lists, diaries for logging behaviour and feelings and information for identifying problems.

Ongoing support mechanisms

Group members identified several ongoing support mechanisms. Several alternative models were proposed for the Support Group but members felt that they wished to continue with the present structure. An open group incorporating gamblers, game players and those supporting them (including professionals if appropriate). They felt that the needs of those supporting gamblers could continue to be addressed in a separate group when specific needs were identified as needing this intervention. The model currently used where initially the group met as a whole and separate needs were addressed as appropriate was favoured. Members felt that the difference in age and life-experience was helpful to all members and should be encouraged.

Members expressed a continuing need for one-to-one and family counselling. This intervention was available on a limited basis through the Project. They felt a helpline would be useful - this could operate initially at a level where individual telephone numbers could be given out, with permission, and possibly a more extensive service in future.

Written information in the form of manuals or short introductory leaflets could be used in addition to the above services.

Users part in any support programme in terms of self-responsibility

Group members felt that they could have a role in several different ways. They could make choices depending on what personal resources they were able to offer at any given time. They

saw the Group as being there for them and having a role themselves in providing a safe and confidential environment. They also felt they had a role in confronting issues in which they had knowledge and experience, in a direct but non-destructive manner. They felt they had a role in not only sharing difficult experiences but also ways of overcoming problems, and to an extent, being a role model.

Members felt they had a befriending role, both within the group and outside, with practical and emotional help. Young gamblers who were problem-free could have a specific role with people their own age. Family members and partners also had a role in supporting each other. Group members also felt they could have a role as telephone contacts. Some members wished to work as trained volunteer counsellors when they had been problem free for sufficient time for this to be appropriate.

Group members expectations of group facilitators

Group members initial expectation of facilitators was that they should provide a safe, confidential environment and facilitate introductions to new members. Facilitators had a role in seeing that all members had an opportunity to take part if they wished and to pick up verbal and non-verbal cues. They should facilitate difficult discussion and keep a balance between honesty and safety. They should make links with emotional issues sometimes difficult to identify.

Members felt that facilitators were the link that helped to keep a cohesive group, that all members could link in with, but did not run the group. They felt it was important that it was recognised that the group belonged to the members as this had helped to empower them as individuals and as a group.

For a full copy of the report "Playing the Game", please write to:

West Glamorgan Council for Voluntary Service, Room 4, Ground Floor, Albion Chambers, Cambrian Place, Swansea, SAl 1XX.

CONTROLLING FRUIT MACHINES

Ray Walker

I am an independent consultant specialising in housing and planning, currently involved in a diverse range of work including being Chairman of the Shopfront Security Group and Secretary of the Association of Retirement Housing Managers. For nine years, until March 1992, I was Director of the National Housing and Town Planning Council (NHTPC). Before that I was the Principal Planning Officer at the Association of Metropolitan Authorities (AMA) having previously been a planning lecturer at what was then Trent Polytechnic.

At the AMA and NHTPC the problems which local authorities face in dealing with planning applications for amusement arcade were often raised with me. These stemmed largely from the fact that the public find it hard to believe that planning cannot consider moral issues. Licensing was the obvious alternative but there was no systematic evidence of a problem to back up public worries about childrens' access to gambling machines.

At NHTPC, I therefore carried out research to establish if there was a problem with young people and their access to gambling machines. We surveyed 9752 children and the finding were published in two reports, "The Use of Amusement Arcades and Gambling Machines: A National Survey" (1988) and "Gambling Machines and Young People" (1989).

Since these reports I have continued to work on this issue, and have been given evidence to a House of Lords Committee and in six Crown Court licensing appeals (the last four of which were successfully defended by the local authority) as well as giving advice to local authorities on their Gaming Act powers. This work revealed another gap in our knowledge. How, and in what ways, were local authorities using their powers to control fruit machines outside pubs, clubs and arcades? In July 1993, my report, "Controlling Fruit Machines", drawing on a survey of 331 of the 333 non-metropolitan district councils in England and Wales was published by the Association of District Councils.

Fruit Machines Outside Arcades and Licensed Premises

Since 1968 district councils have had the power to grant or renew licenses on machines in premises which do not have ajusfice-on-license. They can resolve:

(a) not to, *"grant* any permits in respect of premises of a class specified in the resolution.

(b) not *"grant nor renew* any permit in respect of premises of a class specified in the resolution.

(c) that "where the authority grant or renew a permit in respect of any premises, or in respect of premises of a class specified in the resolution, they will grant or renew it subject to a condition limiting the number of machines to which Part III of this Act applies which may be made available for gaming on the premises so as not to exceed such number as may be specified in the resolution."

A local authority can therefore decide to ban machines from specific types of premises e.g. fish and chip shops or it can list premises where it will allow machines to be licensed. One an authority has made a resolution it must abide by it. A subsequent application for machines in a type of premises covered by the resolution must be refused.

An authority can resolve not to renew existing permits, which have to be renewed every three years, and they will lapse when they first come up for renewal after the passing of the resolution. If not they will, in the normal course of events, continue to be renewed.

Authorities can also resolve that there are some types of premises where machines should be allowed - but up to a maximum number. That maximum number can vary for different types of premises as long as those variations are clearly specified in the resolution.

Survey Results

Of 331 authorities 183 (55.3%) had not passed a resolution but 148 (44.7%) had done so. Those resolutions varied enormously. Most commonly gambling machines are excluded from fish and chip shops and cafes. Some authorities had used their powers as soon as the 1968 Act powers became available, and renewed them in the successor authorities after local government reorganisation in 1974. Far more authorities passed resolutions from the late 1980's onwards as people became increasingly aware of the dangers to young children.

One small but important category of resolutions covers those which ban AWPs everywhere without specifying those classes of premises by name. For example, "any place other than amusement places as defined in paragraph 4 (2) of Schedule 9 to the Gaming Act 1968". All the resolutions were adopted in the past few years and suggest a hardening of attitudes in the light of more and more findings linking children to gambling machines. A few authorities, such as Bassetlaw, Harlow and Torbay, have sought to cover everything by listing just about every conceivable public location.

Seven resolutions specifically refer to young people, for example, "other than amusement centres and licensed clubs, bars and premises where persons under 16 are not admitted". Some of these resolutions are nearer to being blanket resolutions in that there will be very few premises which could be covered that won't come within the restrictions.

District Councils had their attention drawn to the report by the ADC in July 1993. They were urged to consider their use of Section 34 powers and encouraged to use them if they had not already done so or review them if resolutions had not been passed recently. There is already evidence that many authorities are now going through the process of passing resolutions.

References

"Controlling Fruit Machines" is published by the Association of District Councils, 26 Chapter Street, London, SW lP 4ND and is obtainable from them price £15 including postage and packing.

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THE OBSERVATIONAL ANALYSIS OF MARKETING STRATEGIES IN UK AMUSEMENT ARCADES

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An analysis of UK slot machine marketing methods mainly falls into two categories - these being (i) situational characteristics which get the potential gambler into the arcades and (ii) structural characteristics which either induce the gambler to play slot machines or are inducements to continue playing (Griffiths, 1993). The first set of characteristics are primarily features of the environment and can be considered situational determinants of gambling. These include the location of the arcade, the number of arcades in a specified area, possible membership requirements and advertising effects. These variables may be important in the initial decision to gamble even though they are external to the gambling activity itself. The latter set of structural characteristics are concerned with the gambling activity itself and can be differentiated into pure structural characteristics (i.e. what the owner/manufacturer puts into the machine) and psycho-structural characteristics (i.e. how an individual relates to the structural characteristic) (Griffiths, 1993).

Since their are now approximately 2000 amusement arcades in the UK (British Amusement Catering Trades Association, 1988) it will probably lead to arcades introducing more "aggressive" marketing strategies to get people into *their* premises to play *their* machines. They also have the task of getting those people already in the arcade to stay in for longer amounts of time in the hope they will spend more money. For instance, many UK arcades now have restaurant and/or snack facilities (Gaming Board, 1988).

According to Greenlees (1988), the variables that are crucial to slot machine success are floor location, coin denomination and pay off schedules of the machines. In US casinos, restaurants are often positioned in the centre so that customers have to pass the gaming area before *and* after they have eaten. Another strategy is to use deliberate circuitous paths to keep customers in the casino longer, the psychology being that if the patrons are in the casino longer they will spend more money. Another important factor is the need to house machines which cater for all player preferences (Greenlees, 1988). However, in personal communications with members of the Gaming Industry, Griffiths (1988a) has noted that UK amusement arcade owners have realised that some forms of gaming machines (e.g. slot machines) are more profitable than others (e.g. video game machines). It has been suggested by Griffiths (1988b) that this has had two effects on marketing strategy. The first is that there tends to be far more slot machines than video games in arcades, and secondly, the less profitable machines tend to be placed at the back of the arcade so that videogame players have to walk past the more profitable slot machines to get to their preferred choice of game. However empirical support for these suggestions has been lacking.

The psychology of 'gambling advertising' and 'naming' is also important in attracting customers. According to Hess and Diller (1969) gambling advertising is usually aimed at the social (rather than the pathological) gambler. Gambling imagery is designed to make a person spend money, and in almost all advertisements there is a lack of reference to the word "gambling". Instead, guilt reducing statements referring to leisure are used e.g. "Try your luck", "Test your skill", "Get into the holiday spirit" etc. (Hess & Diller, 1969). With regard

to naming, Costa (1988) notes that the names of slot machines are important. For instance, the first slot machine was called "The Liberty Bell" because it typified patriotism in that it was the symbol of American Independence. To date, only one category of names has been formally identified. This was by Hess and Diller (1969) who reported names were often given in a way to imply a rendezvous with chance (e.g. "Fortune Trail"). Names such as this give the impression that the odds of winning are fair in comparison to the 'house'.

Due to a loophole in the law, adolescents in the UK are legally allowed to gamble on slot machines. UK amusement arcades predominantly attract adolescents (Griffiths, 1989; 1991a;b) and many recent studies have shown that a small minority of adolescents are pathological gamblers (Griffiths, 1990a;b;c; Fisher, 1992). It has also been reported by Griffiths (1990e;1991a) that different machines attract different clienteles with regular gamblers (usually male adolescents) preferring the more expensive stake machines. Since legislation has not been forthcoming, a number of arcades now have age restrictions and those arcades who are members of the British Amusement Catering Trades Association (BACTA) are additionally obliged to follow the BACTA code of conduct which prohibits underage gambling (i.e. no "under 16's"). However, the BACTA code of conduct does not apply to seaside arcades as these are deemed to be "family entertainment" and approximately one in five arcade owners are not (and do not have to be) members of BACTA (BACTA, 1988). Additionally, some BACTA members may not adhere to the code of conduct because it is only voluntary. There is concern that many arcade interiors are visually obscured by external characteristics (e.g. darkened windows) and means that children who are inside are hidden from view and escape detection from concemed parties.

Since this study was of an exploratory nature there were no specific hypotheses. However, the study attempted to answer a number of questions in relation to the aforementioned points on marketing strategy. These were:

(1) Do arcades house more slot machines than video games?

(2) Do arcades have a wide range of slot machines which attract a wide ranging clientele?

(3) Are video games situated at the back of the arcade forcing people to walk past the more profitable slot machines?

(4) Are arcades introducing other services (e.g. snack bar/restaurant, bingo hall, selling of miscellaneous merchandise) to attract new customers?

(5) Do arcades have age restrictions and/or display the BACTA code?

(6) Are arcade interiors visually obscured by external characteristics?

(7) Do arcades refer to "gambling" in advertising their services?

(8) Do slot machines' names appear to be important?

(9) Are there any differences between inland and seaside arcades on the above named variables ?

A more detailed account of the aims and methodology are given in the next section.

Method

The data used in this analysis were collected via the monitoring of 33 amusement arcades. Most of the data were collected from six towns in South West England (Dawlish, Dawlish Warren, Exeter, Newton Abbot, Teignmouth and Torquay), although data from two towns in North England (Bradford and Loughborough) which the author regularly frequented during the study period were collected on an opportunistic basis. Of the eight towns, four were inland and four were seaside holiday resorts. A summary of the gaming establishments monitored by town and geographical area is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Breakdown of arcade observations by town, area, location and date.

Town	Area of England	Location	No. of arcades monitored	Observation session dates	No. of visits to each arcade
Bradford	North	Inland	12	Dec 1988; Jan 1989; Jun 1989	3
Dawlish	South West	Coastal	2	May 1988; Aug 1988; Aug 1989	3
Dawlish Warren	South West	Coastal	5	May 1988	1
Exeter	South West	Inland	2	Mar 1988; Oct 1988; Feb 1989	5
Loughborough	Midlands	Inland	2	Dec 1987; Aug 1988; May 1989	3
Newton Abbot	South West	Inland	2	May 1988; Aug 1988; Aug 1989	2
Teignmouth	South West	Coastal	2	May 1988; Aug 1988; Aug 1989	3
Torquay	South West	Coastal	6	Feb 1989; Jul 1989	2

The data were collected over a period of 28 months using both participatory and non-participatory observation methodologies. Each arcade was visited between two and five times (except for those in Dawlish Warren which were only visited once) with each observation session lasting between thirty minutes and three hours depending on how busy the arcade was and what clientele were in the arcade. Most of the observations took place between 11a.m. and 5p.m. although evening observations (6-9.30 p.m.) were made in Exeter, Loughborough and Torquay. The data were usually recorded onto a pocket tape recorder and mechanical counter, although on occasions immediate retrospective notes were taken. The approach was on the whole empirical and qualitative, and can be regarded as an observational field study capable of suggesting hypotheses but not of confirming fact.

A majority of the data collected concerned the arcade gamblers themselves (e.g. behavioural characteristics, motivations for gambling etc.) and have been published elsewhere (see Griffiths, 1990e;f,1991a). The data reported here specifically concern the remaining observations examining the differing marketing strategies and characteristics of inland and seaside amusement arcades in the UK. The variables examined and compared (using Fisher's Exact Test for statistical comparative analysis) were (a) the numbers of slot machines versus the number of video games in each arcade, (b) the presence or absence of cheap stake slot machines (as an indicator of slot range), (c) the positioning of video games in the arcade (i.e. are they located at the rear of the arcade?), (d) the presence or absence of a snack

bar/restaurant, a bingo hall and/or selling of other merchandise, (e) the presence or absence of an age restriction notice and/or BACTA code of conduct and (f) the presence or absence of an obscured view into the arcade's interior. Opportunistic observations about gambling advertising were also made. Additionally, a small survey examining the names of slot machines' names in two of the Bradford arcades was made. This simply involved the recording of every single different slot machine name in two of the arcades under study. Where the same machine appeared more than once, only one machine name was recorded for the purpose of analysis. After all the names had been recorded, a coding scheme intuitively constructed by the author using the principles of content analysis was performed.

Results

In both inland and seaside amusement arcades, the numbers of slot machines heavily outweighed the numbers of video game machines (see Table 2). Additionally, there was a significant difference in the ratio of slot machines to video games in inland arcades (9 : 2) and seaside arcades (9 : 5). Results indicated that approximately half of the arcades had video games situated at the rear only and that customers at inland arcades had less choice in machine stake size than those at seaside arcades with just over a third of inland arcades housing cheap stake machines compared to two-thirds of seaside arcades. However, this result was not significant (see Table 3). Analysis of the remaining arcade marketing characteristics revealed that over a third of them had a snack bar/restaurant (nearly all of which were located at the rear of the arcade), approximately a quarter of them housed a bingo hall and a similar number sold other miscellaneous kinds of merchandise (see Table 3). It was also revealed that less than half the arcades had any kind of age restriction (although this did not necessarily prohibit the underaged from being in the arcade as a number of establishments appeared to turn a blind eye to adolescents playing the machines), that only five arcades displayed the BACTA code of conduct and that approximately two-thirds of the arcades had an obscured view of the interior (e.g. dark brown exterior windows, large posters/notices in the window, merchandise for sale blocking the internal view etc.).

Table 2. Differences between inland and seaside amusement arcades on numbers of fruit machines, video game machines and adolescents (n=28)*

	Inland		**Coastal**		**All**	
	Total	Average	Total	Average	Total	Average
No. fruit machines	651	36.2	598	59.8	1249	44.6
No. video game Machines	147	8.2	335	33.5	482	17.2
Fruit machine: video game	9:2		9:5		13:5	

* No count was made at the five arcades at Dawlish Warren therefore only 28 of the arcades are included in this analysis.

In comparing the marketing characteristics of inland and seaside arcades, three significant differences emerged (see Table 3). Inland arcades had significantly more age restrictions on children and adolescents, inland arcades had significantly more obscured views of the arcade's interior, and the inland arcades which housed video games were significantly more likely to have them situated at the rear of the arcade.

Table 3. Differences between inland and seaside amusement arcades in marketing characteristics (n=33)

	Inland	Coastal	All	Significance
Wide range of machine stakes in arcade	7/18	10/15	17/13	ns
Video games at rear of arcade	9/13*	4/15	13/28	p<0.05
Snack bar/restaurant in arcade	9/18	4/15	13/33	ns
Bingo hall in arcade	5/18	3/15	8/33	ns
Other merchandise sold in arcade	7/18	2/15	9/33	ns
Age restriction in arcade	14/18	1/15	15/33	p<0.001
BACCA code in arcade	4/18	1/15	5/33	ns
Obscured view of arcade interior	17/18	4/15	21/33	p<0.001

During the survey of amusement arcade advertisements (which were usually in the form of either posters in the arcade window or self standing boards placed on the pavement outside the arcade) it became evident that the word "gambling" in any form was non-existent. Many of the signs and slogans in seaside towns were geared specifically towards the young (e.g. "children's entertainment", "fun for the kids" etc.). Other adverts, usually at inland arcades, could be considered those which attracted the 'twentieth century child' with a thirst for technology (e.g. "Come inside - all the latest machines") or humour (e.g. "Come inside - slots of fun").

Table 4. Categorisation of names of slot machines

Money	Skill	Chance	Miscellaneous
Action Bank	Circle Skill	Fortune Trail*	Naughty but Nice
Action Note	Classic Nudge	Just Fruit	Nifty Fifty
Bank-A-Note	Fruit Skill		Reel Crazy
Cash Attack	Go-For-Gold		Reel Money*
Cashline	Hit the Top		Reel 2 Reel
Cashpoint	Line-up		
Fortune Trail*	Nudge Fever		
Grab-a-Bart	Skill Cash*		
Hi-Lo Silver	Super Line-Up		
Grab the Bank			
Money Belt			
Piggy Bank			
Pound Sterling			
Pound Stretcher			
Reel Money*			
Skill Cash*			
Smash and Grab			
Swap-A-Note			

* Three machines are located in more than one category

The mini-survey of slot machine names revealed three basic categories and a fourth miscellaneous one although not all the names were mutually exclusive. By far the most common (53%) were the machines which had a reference to money in their names (e.g. "Action Bank", "Cashpoint", "Cashline", "Piggy Bank" etc.). The second category of machine

names (26%) were those which mentioned skill or implied they were skill based (e.g. "Skillcash", "Fruitskill" etc.) whereas the third category (6%) implied they were chance based (e.g. "Fortune Trail"). The remaining machines' names (15%) either included reference to the word "reel" (e.g. "Reel Money", "Reel to Reel", "Reel Crazy" etc.) or could be described as acoustically attractive (e.g. "Nifty Fifty", "Naughty but Nice" etc.).

Discussion

This study, although relatively small scale, did demonstrate some clear findings. Since slot machines make more money per machine for the owner(s) it was perhaps unsurprising to find high slot machine to video game machine ratios in both types of arcade. There were, however, some differences. In general, seaside arcades had a significantly higher proportion of video games which were spread evenly throughout the arcade (as opposed to being located at the back of the arcade). In addition, seaside arcades had a greater diversity of machines in both type and stake size. This suggests that although arcade lay out and machine profitability are important regardless of arcade type, they appear to serve different functions depending on locality. Seaside arcades (like their inland counterparts) primarily exist to make money, however they appear to be less profit oriented probably because they cater for the traditional family on holiday and do not wish to alienate potential clientele by housing a whole arcade with the new generation of more expensive stake (and seemingly more complex) machines which appear to attract only a small subsection of the population, i.e. male adolescents (Griffiths, 1990e;1991a). On the other hand, inland arcades cannot rely on tourists to keep themselves in business. Their profits rely primarily on a smaller number of people who either have few day-to-day responsibilities and/or whose available leisure time is greater than the average person. Under these conditions it is perhaps unsurprising that inland arcades (i) have higher slot machine to video game machine ratios, (ii) house more expensive stake machines, (iii) have a less extensive range of machines, (iv) house the less profit making machines at the rear of the arcade and (v) cater primarily for a specific hardcom section of the population.

Since there is only a moral and/or voluntary obligation rather than a legal restriction preventing adolescents from frequenting arcades it is perhaps predictable that some arcades displaying age restrictions allowed adolescent gambling to take place on their premises. BACTA estimates its members to comprise 80% of all arcade owners, however only 15% of arcades in this study displayed the BACTA code of conduct which is significantly lower than would be expected (although as mentioned previously the code of conduct regarding age restriction does not cover seaside arcades as they are deemed to be "family entertainment"). There is no reason to suspect that the arcades surveyed in this study were unrepresentative of UK amusement arcades which suggests a majority of BACTA members in this study did not display the code of conduct (for reasons unbeknown to the author) or that BACTA's membership estimate of all arcade owners (i.e. 80%) is significantly higher than it actually is. The reason why inland arcades had significantly more obscured views of their interiors might be along the same lines as to why betting offices in the UK have whitewashed exteriors i.e. to limit the attraction of going into such places in the first place. It could be argued that although those already in the arcade are unlikely to be seen, it may prevent potential adolescent gamblers from going in the first place. However, such an argument has yet to receive empirical support.

It would appear from the results that a majority of arcades are now offering at least one alternative service (e.g. snack bar) in a bid to either attract new customers or to keep those already in the arcade as long as possible. Again (as with the location of video games), the majority of those arcades with a food facility positioned it at the rear of the arcade forcing its

customers to pass many machines that they may not have ordinarily done so. This is similar to the restaurant positioning strategy of US casinos outlined by Greenlees (1988). The introduction of bingo into a quarter of the arcades studied has meant a new clientele with available leisure time (i.e. middle to older aged women) are exposed to slot machines. However, research from this study published elsewhere (see Griffiths, 1991a) indicated that this particular clientele played older cheaper stake slot machines i.e. traditional one arm bandit type machines. This has led some arcades to deliberately place the cheaper stake machines adjacent to the bingo hall and/or away from the more complex looking machines (Griffiths, 1988a). The selling of other merchandise (e.g. ornaments, cigarette lighters etc.) may not necessarily be a money making marketing strategy but a way of ensuring arcades get a licence to house slot machines. Slot machine licenses are granted at the discretion of the local authorities and in personal communications with one of these authorities, this author was told that shops who apply for a slot machine license are invariably granted them. Therefore, some arcades may be submitting licence applications under the pretence of being a bona fide retailing outlet rather than an amusement arcade per se.

The assertions by Hess and Diller (1969) that gambling advertising relies on guilt reducing concepts and by Costa (1988) that the names of slot machines are important were both supported. Interestingly, the most common category of slot machine names which had a reference to money in their names (e.g. "Action Bank", "Money Belt") all suggested places where a person can get money from, *not* where a person can lose it. The second category implying some skill element were all 'modern' machines and are trying to attract those people who desire control in their games. According to some members of the gaming industry, this is what the new breed of players desire most (Griffiths, 1988a). The third category is what Hess and Diller would describe as "a rendezvous with chance" implying a fair chance of winning. The survey of slot machines was obviously not extensive but did highlight that names do appear to be important in terms of the image a machine projects.

Results from this study have indicated a number of significant and subtle differences between the two types of amusement arcade. This suggests that the type of clientele that arcades attract may be determined by the marketing strategies employed. It is probable (although it cannot be confirmed from this study) that the management of inland arcades realise there is only a limited market for their product because it relies (essentially) on those individuals who have available free time (as opposed to seaside arcades who for large parts of the year can rely on tourists with an abundance of leisure time). Therefore, for inland arcades to make as much money as seaside arcades (which for most of the year have less customers than their coastal counterparts) each individual in an inland arcade has to spend more per head. It is therefore somewhat predictable that inland arcades have greater numbers of higher stake slot machines with bigger profit margins. However, since inland arcades are frequented primarily by adolescents (Griffiths, 1991a) there is a moral dilemma concerning (what some would say) the "exploitation" of the more vulnerable individuals in our society. Freedom to promote one's product (in this case "entertainment") does not appear to be the issue. The real issue is whether arcades should be consciously (or unconsciously) targeting their product at the young particularly when research has indicated that the younger a child starts to play slot machines the more likely they are to develop pathological gambling tendencies (Griffiths, 1990c). Based on research findings in this and other studies (e.g. Fisher, 1992: Griffiths, 1990a;c), the question of whether legislation is needed for the minority of potential gambling addicts at the expense of the majority's enjoyment is one issue that should be debated further at a Governmental level.

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GAMBLING AND THE LAW: TWO SHORT STORIES

Susanna FitzGerald

Instead of telling you about the nuts and bolts of our law which some of you know may already, I thought I would tell you a couple of stories, but I am afraid neither of them is funny. The first is a success story but it is a Cautionary Tale. The second is a more troubled story and is unfinished.

The First Story

This is the story of our present Gaming Act 1968, and in particular why we have it and whether it is working or not. The Gaming Act 1968 covers gambling generally, i.e. whether you can gamble in the street or not, casinos, bingo clubs and gaming machines. It does not cover on and off track betting, pools betting or lotteries. They all have different legislation and not nearly such exciting stories behind them. Before 1960, the USA was not the only country to have "prohibition". We had it in Britain as well, at least partially, but it referred to gambling and in particular to off track cash betting, and gaming in casinos, bingo establishments and with machines, and most types of lottery.

The Royal Commission on Betting Lotteries and Gaming in 1949-1951, effectively said that no great social harm was caused by gaming. As events showed, how lulled into a false sense of security can anyone be! The Betting and Gaming Act in 1960 aimed to continue that prohibition as far as gaming was concerned, (although not with regard to betting) apart from some small scale gaming in members clubs (i.e. clubs owned and managed by the members themselves), for worthy causes (this was known as the "Vicars Charter"), and in other ways no doubt considered harmless. However the drafters got it monumentally and disastrously wrong as far as gaming was concerned. I hope that this was through naiveté rather than anything else. In 16 sections and 4 schedules, the 1960 Act turned gaming law on its head. It caused or permitted chaos, violence and extortion, and led to a powerful public outcry against gaming. This was only finally corrected by the Gaming Act 1968.

The main problems with the 1960 Act were:
  (i)   It permitted gaming in any clubs where gaming was an activity of the club.

  (ii) It permitted a charge for gaming if it were "a fixed sum of money determined before the gaming began".

  (iii) It permitted gaming in members' and proprietors' clubs (i.e. clubs commercially owned and run for commercial gain).

These three provisions permitted commercial gaming.

  (iv) It did not give the police the right of entry to the clubs where gaming was taking place.

  (vi)There was no standardisation of the riles of the games, but it made legal gaming where the chances in a game were equally favourable to all the players or the gaming was so conducted that the chances were equally favourable to all the players.

This last problem led to cases between the police and the casinos up and down the courts as to whether this, that, or the next thing was or was not a game of equal chance! On top of all

this freedom, the Act made no change to the law on credit gaming. This was not illegal, but gaming debts were irrecoverable at law.

So far as machines were concerned, the Act also caused problems. Gaming machines were allowed to be installed on any premises, without any licensing system. They were subject to some restrictions such as the amount of the maximum stake, the number of machines, that there should be no public access to the premises where the machines were installed, and that those premises should not be wholly or mainly frequented by young people. There were other restrictions too: all stakes had to be applied as prizes or for purposes other than private gain. However this provision could be ignored or got round as there was no licensing system, the police had no right to inspect the machines, and no records had to be kept.

So what happened? Of course commercial gaming flourished. According to the 1976 Royal Commission on Gambling, "casinos were flourishing like weeds in many parts of the country" (Paragraph 18.1). By 1968 there were about 1200 casinos. There were gambling junkets from abroad, the gamblers being brought over by special charter flights. There were frequent protection rackets, associated both with casinos and more particularly with machines. For example, the proprietors of some boarding houses were forced to have machines on their premises by criminals, and organised crime took a large slice of the profits. There was no prohibition against profit sharing agreements between the suppliers and operators of machines. Naturally organised crime became very heavily involved, both our home grown variety as well as the Mafia. Blackmail and violence were used to enforce gambling debts.

Finally, the law was very difficult to enforce so far as the type of gaming was concerned. I have already mentioned that there was a running battle through the Courts between the police and the casinos over charging for gaming and the way the games were played. Although the police generally won (but not always) eventually the police became very dispirited in certain parts of the country. A policy decision was issued to the London Police in 1966, effectively telling the London Police to give up on enforcing the law in the London Casinos unless there were allegations of cheating or they became the haunts of criminals. One enterprising MP, Mr Blackburn, became so incensed that he took the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to Court to try to make him enforce the law. In fact the policy decision was revoked before the final Court decision in the Court of Appeal, but, as you can imagine, the Court of Appeal had some sharp words for the Police (see R V Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis ex parte Blackburn 1968 2QB 118).

Mr Roy Jenkins (then Home Secretary) commented in the Times on 13th September 1966:

> "The Betting and Gaming Act, 1960, has led to abuses, particularly in the field of gaming clubs, which were not foreseen by its promoters. This country has become a gamblers paradise, more wide open in this respect than any comparable country. This has led to a close and growing connection between gaming clubs and organised crime, often violent crime, in London and other big cities. The fat profits made by proprietors (often out of the play itself and quite contrary to the intention of the 1960 Gaming Act) made them sitting targets for protection rackets. In addition, gaming on credit, with gaming debts unenforceable at law, means that strong arm methods are sometimes used to extort payment from those who have gambled beyond their means."

This was quoted by Lord Denning in the Blackburn case (see page 133).

So to misquote the words of Edward, Prince of Wales, "something had to be done". That "something" began to be done quite soon after the 1960 Act came into force but culminated in the 1968 Gaming Act, which is still in force today.

That Act set up:-

(i) The Gaming Board.

(i) Its vetting system;

  (iii)The Licensing System, which is regulated by licensing justices and Local Authorities. The basis of the Licensing System for casinos and bingo clubs is that the applicants have to show an unstimulated demand in the local area where the premises are situated, before they can get a licence.

It also provides that: -

(i) Casinos are limited to certain areas;

(ii) Strong powers of control are given to the Gaming Board, the Justices and the Police;

(iii)Profit sharing provisions between suppliers and operators of machines are made illegal (see Section 28(2)).

By regulations under the Act, the Casino games and their odds are standardised;

The Act made gaming on credit illegal, but it permitted licensed gaming establishments to take cheques and sue on those cheques at law in certain circumstances (section 16). The 1976 Royal Commission said that this was "to instil a sense of responsibility into players and to reduce the temptation to recover the money by blackmail or intimidation" (paragraph 18.62). Indeed, as casinos cannot release debts, they may if necessary have to sue on them.

The aims of the Act were, inter alia, to bring commercial gaming under stricter control, to get rid of crime, to cut out excessive profits, to reduce drastically the number of casinos, to restrict bingo to a neighbourly form of gaming for modest prizes, and to check the proliferation of gaming machines.

Has it succeeded? Overwhelmingly "yes"! Gaming is perceived to be, and I believe it is, conducted honestly and fairly, organised crime has gone, protection rackets and extortion have gone, casinos have been considerably reduced from about 1200 to about 120. Bingo is very neighbourly and indeed fulfils a valuable social function, and gaming machines have been brought under control.

The Industry's view of the Act is very positive, although inevitably there are a few complaints because naturally as entrepreneurs they would like more freedom. However, overall the Industry does not want change. The system is working, it enables the Industry to get on and run its business, and to be and be seen to be respectable, and therefore not at risk from adverse public opinion and new and more restrictive legislation.

Despite the rigorous controls of the Act and although the recession has hit everybody, the Industry is large. There are over 120 casinos, over 1000 licensed bingo clubs, and nearly 230,000 gaming machines. The drop in Britain in 1991/1992 in casinos was £1914 million, of which £1204 million was in London. Incidentally the house win (as a proportion of the drop) was 19%. As far as bingo is concerned the amount staked between 1990/1991 amounted to £661 million. (Figures from the 1991/2 Gaming Board Report).

Will there be any more changes to the Gaming Act? There have been some since 1968, but these have been mostly tinkering around the edges, or filling in the old gap. Most recently the prohibition against advertising by bingo clubs has been relaxed, but they are still not allowed to advertise on television or the radio. Generally there are unlikely to be any major changes,

and certainly the Industry does not want any, unless it is forced on it by Europe. I understand that a decision from the European Commission is expected during October.

The only likely major change in the Gaming Legislation is as a whole concerns lotteries, which are not covered by the 1968 Act. The National Lottery is still in the egg, and we shall just have to wait and see its final shape.

The Gaming Act 1968 is a huge success story, but I did say this was a Cautionary Tale. The moral is obvious: the 1949-51 Royal Commission considered that no great harm was caused by Gaming. In 1960, inadvertently and possibly because the drafters felt so secure that Gaming was harmless and had no idea how quickly things could disintegrate, the law was changed, allowing great freedom. Within a couple of years and certainly by 1966, significant parts of the then gaming industry had reached the bottom of the pit of crime and violence, extortion and general illegality.

The Second Story

This story deals with racing. I am told that off track cash betting is a subject close to the hearts of many Americans. Off track cash betting was legalised in Britain in 1960 by that same Betting and Gaming Act. Before then it was illegal but probably fairly widespread.

Of course, betting and racing are inextricably linked, so when consideration was being given to whether betting shops should be legalised, the Racing Industry felt that it should have a share of the money that would be generated. Also it was obvious that attendances at racecourses would drop, and indeed it now seems that about 90% of the people interested in racing in this country never go near a race course (see the evidence given to the Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report, Levy on Horserace Betting).

As a result, the idea of the Betting Levy was born. It was originally set up in 1961. The Levy is a monetary contribution from the bookmakers and the Tote to racing (Section 24 of the Betting Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963). The Horse Race Betting Levy Board was set up to administer it. The Board consists of a Chairman and seven members. The Chairman and two members are appointed by the Home Secretary, three members are appointed by the Jockey Club, and the other two members are the Chairman of the Tote and the Chairman of the Bookmakers Committee. Every year the Board negotiates with the bookies and the Tote over the total amount of the Levy for that year. When the amount is agreed, a scheme is drawn up to try to produce that sum. The Levy is not a straight percentage across betting turnover but it is based on a percentage of horserace betting turnover in betting shops, combined with a flat fee for on track bookies.

The Levy goes to:-

(i) The improvement of breeds of horses;

(ii) The advancement or encouragement of veterinary science or veterinary education;

(iii) The improvement of horse racing. Under this head comes expenditure on racecourses and in particular improving facilities, giving daily grants to racecourses, contributions to prize money, and payments towards the integrity of racing. (Section 24)

It is the Levy Board which decides specifically where the money is to go. This year the Levy is estimated to produce £45.5 million. Originally it was thought that it might produce £48 million but it seems that horserace betting turnover has dropped this year, so the figure expected is less.

Racing says it is in crisis. Racecourses cannot afford good facilities whereas abroad the facilities are far better. Gates are falling. Prize money is too low, the average first prize being between £1500 and £4000. Abroad the prizes are far higher and I believe that in America on average prizes can be ten times the size. As the cost of keeping a horse in training and racing in England is about £20,000 per annum, even if a horse were to win three times during a year it would still be no where near covering its costs. In addition to these costs, of course, is the cost of buying a horse, which even for a middling horse could be £50,000 plus VAT which in England is 17.5%, and much higher than other countries with substantial bloodstock sales. Large numbers of owners are leaving racing or they are taking their horses abroad. Many trainers and studs over here are selling up, and even if they are not, stable lads and staff can be very underpaid. Racing says it should get more money from betting. After all where would the bookies and the Tote be without British Horse Racing?

On the other hand, the bookies say: why should we pay more out of our profits? We make a net profit of between 2.5 - 3% of turnover (and that is before the deduction of interest and corporation tax) and many bookies make much less. Therefore if the Levy goes up the punter will have to pay it. That is not only grossly unfair but may well stop him betting and drive him into other leisure pursuits either gambling pursuits such as bingo, machines or lotteries, or completely different pursuits such as going to the cinema. Also it may drive punters to illegal betting, which of course is socially undesirable.

So far the arguments of each side seem quite clear. However, it is not so simple as that. There is evidence, for example, that racing is not actually on its last legs, and that some parts of it are doing fine (see the evidence given to the Home Affairs Committee in 1991). However, according to the Home Affairs Committee Report, "if a crisis is not upon us, there is at least a worsening trend which needs urgent attention". (See Vol 1, paragraph 19). Very recently, Sheikh Mohammed AI-Maktoum and his brother, who are the owners of the largest number of horses in training in Britain, threatened to take most of their horses away from this country. On the other side, clearly the big three bookies of Ladbrokes, William Hill and Corals are not exactly starving. It must be said however that some smaller betting shops are closing down and that horserace betting turnover has decreased significantly this year.

The Home Affairs Committee considered the question of the Levy in great depth and did not come up with any magic answers but made a wide variety of recommendations. Recently, some changes have been made. For example the Government charges Betting Duty on off-track betting, on the money staked. This duty was reduced from 8% to 7.75% this year. The extra 0.25% has gone to the Levy and is expected to produce about £15 million. A further example is that changes are being made to the Fixtures List by the Jockey Club, so that races are more often run when the betting shops are open. This has produced an increase in betting turnover and consequently an increase in the Levy. Did I not say that racing and betting are inextricably linked?

However there are no easy or straightforward solutions to this problem. It is important to find one as over 400,000 people are given employment by the racing industry and that does not include people employed in the betting industry.

If anyone has any suggestions would they put them on a postcard please, and send it to: HM Government, Whitehall, London, England.