



Pay for Grades – Gambling, Incentive or Bribery?

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

What ever happened to an intrinsic desire to learn? In August, 2010, Ultrinsic, a New York-based company, made headlines across North America as news spread of their website that enables students to wager on their grades. The site started a year ago with a reported 600 students at Penn and New York University wagering on their grades. This year, Ultrinsic hoped to have 36 universities on board including Harvard and Stanford with aspirations of greatly expanding participation to at least 100 students per institution for a projected total of about 3600.

The basic principle is simple - students register on this website, provide Ultrinsic with a course schedule and access to official school

records. Odds are calculated based on the student’s prior academic performance, the difficulty and grading history of the course. Students then decide how much they want to wager with bets starting at 25\$ and increasing with usage and number of courses. Payouts (incentives) are higher for long-shots such as students who historically have a poorer academic standing but who achieve higher than their usual grades in the registered courses. If students do not attain the desired grade, they lose their investment. Options exist for betting on multiple courses and overall GPA. This full-service site even offers students ‘Course Insurance’ and ‘Semester Insurance’.

Questions remain about the legality of Ultrinsic as some detractors argue that the site constitutes online gambling, currently banned in the United States. On September 8, 2010, Nassau County Legislator David Denenberg held a press conference in which he expressed his disapproval of the Ultrinsic concept and indicated he has written letters to the Federal Trade Commission and the New York State Attorney General among others. He contends the site may violate the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act (UIGEA). Company founders insist that the site is providing students with ‘incen-

tives’ and that their system is not gambling as it involves skill rather than chance. Students, they feel, have complete control over their grade outcome unlike games of chance.

Aside from the possible legal ramifications and the obvious ethical dilemma of intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation, there are other questionable aspects of the Ultrinsic model. The odds calculations for courses seem somewhat dubious as they are based upon soft, non-quantitative measures such as the degree of difficulty and grading history. The issue of students possibly cheating to attain better grades has also been put forth and some students have indicated that they know more about their educational institutions and teachers/courses, therefore perceiving an advantage over the Ultrinsic “house” odds. Ultimately, this wagers-on-grades paradigm represents yet another normalization of the youth gambling experience.

The concept of cash incentives to reward academic achievement, encourage attendance or promote behavioural changes is not new or without controversy. New York City and other U.S. jurisdictions have introduced programs (largely in disadvantaged neigh-

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borhoods) to offer monetary and other incentives (such as gift cards and cell phone minutes) in return for better grades, attendance and behavior. There is empirical evidence that cash incentives seem to improve attendance and grades among low-achieving students. Supporters of pay-for-grade programmes argue that this form of incentive is of value for students who lack innate intrinsic motivation. Additionally, some feel that this type of programme mirrors real-life employment whereby good performance is usually rewarded by monetary gain (raises and bonuses). In other words, student payout is good training for future endeavours.

On the other side of this controversial issue, detractors warn that pay-for-grade programmes may inhibit students from developing an intrinsic love of learning or desire to succeed. Weaker students, who may for a multitude of reasons be poor academic performers, are further disadvantaged by such incentive plans. Not only do some professionals view such monetary payout programmes negatively, it seems that based on a 1999 research study by Public Agenda that students did not rank cash incentives as a significant motivator for enhancing academic performance. Eighty-nine percent of students indicated that getting into a good college motivates them “a lot” to work hard in school and eighty-nine percent also were motivated by getting a college scholarship. The next three most common motivators were: having to show a transcript to get a job (84%), fear of being held back a grade in school (74%), and avoiding summer school (72%). Personal satisfaction

(72%), pleasing their parents (70%), and losing sports and extracurricular privileges (61%) came next. Finally, getting paid for better grades (61%) was only more motivating than one other factor, which was making teachers proud (46%).

Another twist on the cash incentive for grades model is GradeFund. Started by brothers Michael and Matthew Kopko, this website provides a way for students to raise money by having family and friends sponsor their academic achievement similar to fund-raising efforts for charities. The brothers launched this endeavour to help students “leverage the power of communities to help pay for college.” Students log into GradeFund, create an account, invite sponsorship and over the course of the school year, upload their transcripts for verification. Sponsorship amounts can be as low as 5\$ per course. Flexibility is also provided enabling sponsors to either pledge dollars on a per course basis or by general subject (e.g., chemistry, math). Additionally, sponsors can stipulate how the earned monies are to be distributed – either directly to the student or to the college or educational institution. GradeFund issues payment for every 100\$ earned and if a student cashes out before reaching the 100\$ goal, GradeFund withholds 5% of the earnings. Corporate sponsorship is also encouraged. ZooToo.com was GradeFund’s first corporate sponsor, pledging \$15 to the first 100 students who submitted proof that they earned an A in veterinary medicine. The GradeFund Founders also hoped to provide a search mechanism for employers seeking potential

employees. Currently, about 19,000 students have signed up for GradeFund’s services with more enlisting daily.

Rising educational costs along with mounting competition for college spots and employment opportunities are placing significant financial and psychological burdens on students and their families. The basic key to success, whether academic or professional, is motivation. The real question is how to stimulate, motivate and perpetuate the motivation to ensure that youth maximize their potential. Monetary payouts may prove effective for some but caution must be exercised when seeking to create motivational strategies for students. While betting on grade performance may encompass an element of skill, is it not still gambling? Undoubtedly, there is no one-size-fits-all solution, but the goal of parents and educational institutions should be unified in developing motivated and engaged individuals who harbour a life-long desire to learn and better themselves.

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National Need

By Keith Whyte, Executive Director, NCPG

It may surprise you to learn that there is not a single cent dedicated to addressing youth gambling and problem gambling in the entire \$2+ trillion current U.S. Federal budget. As the U.S. advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families, it is the NCPG's job to convince members of Congress and their staff to correct this oversight.

We developed the Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act (CPG) as the first step to correct this oversight. The legislation has two major components. The first is a simple one sentence amendment to the Public Health Service Act that includes problem gambling in the mandate of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness. The second is an appropriation of \$14.2 million dollars per year for competitive grants to prevent, treat and research problem gambling. The scope of the bill is 5 years, so the total funding is \$71 million. Grant recipients may be state and tribal health agencies or non-profit organizations. Over 5 years, the bill would provide a total of:

- \$20 million in grants for problem gambling research;
- \$1 million for a national public awareness campaign.

CPG was introduced in the House of Representatives as H.R. 2906 in June 2009. The bill was referred to the Energy & Commerce Committee, Health Subcommittee. The Senate version, S. 3418, was introduced in May 2010 and was sent to the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Both bills were introduced with bipartisan sponsorship as we believe strongly that fighting gambling addiction is a non-partisan concern. To date, H.R. 2906 has 68 sponsors, 16% of the 435 House members. S. 3418 stands at 4 sponsors or 4% of the Senate.

Research shows every \$1 spent on problem gambling services saves at least \$2 in social costs. Programs to prevent gambling problems from starting are obviously the most ethical and effective means to reduce the financial cost and emotional trauma to youth, families and communities and improve quality of life, family relationships, financial and mental health, housing and other key indicators of health and welfare. Risk behaviors among youth are an important policy priority for SAMHSA.

- \$50 million in grants for problem gambling prevention and treatment;

Why is problem gambling a national public health issue?

- Presence of gambling - 48 states and 2/3 of Federally-recognized tribes have legalized gambling;
- Participation in gambling- 70% of adults gambled at least once in the past year, 15% at least once in the past week;
- Proceeds from gambling-\$95 billion in gaming revenues last year to states and companies;
- Profits to the U.S. Treasury from the Federal withholding tax on individual jackpots - approximately \$6 billion per year;
- Prevalence of gambling addiction - 6-9 million adults and 500,000 adolescents meet criteria in a given year;
- Perception of gambling addiction as a serious issue by a large majority of the public.
- Problems - the social cost of problem gambling, including addiction, bankruptcy and crime, was almost \$7 billion last year.

In addition to providing a safety net to the millions of problem gamblers and their families, CPG lays the foundation for the creation of public/private partnerships that will enable states to reduce the social costs of this disorder. CPG funding will be directed to local and state organizations who will not only have opportunities to bid on research and treatment grants, but also will have additional re-

sources and impetus to work with their state legislatures to develop proactive policies and programs to mitigate youth gambling issues.

Over 90 national, state and local health organizations—including the American Psychological Association, American School Counselors Association and the American Society of Addiction Medicine—support the bill.

The National Council on Problem Gambling is the national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families. NCPG was founded in 1972 and is a non-partisan, non-profit foundation that is neutral on gambling. NCPG and its 34 state affiliate chapters work together to provide the majority of services for problem gamblers and their families. ♦

Lawmakers Propose Bill Targeting Unattended Kids in Casino Lots

Two Pennsylvania lawmakers have proposed legislation to enforce harsher penalties including substantially increased fines and jail time for parents who leave children unattended in casino parking lots. At the Parx Casino, located at the Philadelphia Park racetrack, there have been seven incidents of children being left unattended in parking lot cars while the parents gamble in the casino. Most recently, a father was accused of leaving his 7 and 12-year old children unattended in the casino parking lot late at night while he played blackjack for over 30 minutes. The casino has increased manned patrols of the parking lot and is installing a greater number of surveillance cameras. Casino security officials are also calling upon patrons to report the presence of unattended children in parking lot cars. This problem has surfaced numerous times across many states in the last year.

Gangs and Drugs in U.S. Public Schools

In August 2010, CASA (The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University) released the findings of their National Survey of American Attitudes on Substance Abuse XV: Teens and Parents. Their research indicates that more than one quarter (27%) of public school students aged 12-17 report attending a school in which drugs and gangs are present. This survey also indicates that compared to adolescents attending drug/gang free schools, students in a school that is both drug and gang infected are more likely to partake in other risky behaviors including marijuana use, alcohol consumption, and smoking. The CASA research also shows that students in private/religious schools report significantly lower rates of gangs in their schools as compared to students in public schools (2% vs. 46% respectively).

Smart Phone Betting for Gamblers in Nevada

American Wagering Inc. has developed an application that will enable BlackBerry users to place sports bets from their phones with deployment of the application scheduled to occur in time for the college football and NFL seasons. At this time, the application can only be used in the state of Nevada and GPS monitoring will ensure the location of the user. American Wagering Inc. has roughly 60 horse and sports book operations in the state of Nevada. Users must appear in person at one of the company's sports book operations when first setting up an account to ensure age verification and link the account to one specific mobile phone. Similar applications are planned for the iPhone and Windows-based phones with each new version requiring approval from the Nevada Gaming Control Board. With estimates of mobile gaming approaching \$42 billion in the next year, a new alternative form of gambling is not far off. ♦

Sharing More than Meals: Does Family Dinner Time Curb High-Risk Behaviours In Adolescents?

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

Envision the “family dinner”. Dad is at the head of the table, listening intently to the ongoing discussion. Mom, in her apron and perfectly-pressed frock, is serving a plump roast chicken that she’s cooked over the afternoon. The children are gathered around, scrubbed and dressed in their best clothes, smiling and laughing.

With parents spending more time at work and children participating in larger numbers of extracurricular activities, it is not entirely surprising to hear of families eating dinner in the same house but not necessarily together.

Increasingly, it seems that the customary family dinner, wonderfully depicted in prime-time television programs such as “The Cosby Show” and “Growing Pains”, is occurring less frequently than in the past. With parents spending more time at work and children participating in larger numbers of extracurricular activities, it is not entirely surprising to hear of families eating dinner in the same house but not necessarily together. Indeed, Turcotte (2007) found that the average time spent with family at meals decreased from 60 minutes in 1986 to 45 minutes in 2005. Additionally, Mestdag and Vandeweyer (2005) reported that the average number of family meals taken on workdays decreased

significantly from approximately one and a half daily family meals in 1966 to less than one family meal per day in 1999, and that nearly four in ten parents failed to have a single family meal on workdays. Moreover, in a national survey of 1,063 adolescents, about half as many 17-year-olds reported having dinner with their families 7 nights a week than

12-year-olds (27% of 17-year-olds vs. 50% of 12-year-olds) (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 2007). These changes to the tradition of family meal time are concerning given the large body of recent research literature highlighting the positive impact of regular family dinners on adolescent health and development (Eisenberg et al., 2008; Fulkerson et al., 2006; Neumark-Sztainer et al., 2010; Sen, 2010).

The Family that Eats Together

The principle idea behind the adage “The family that eats together stays together” is that family meal times serve as the foundation for building healthy families.

Over the last ten years, empirical evidence has increasingly lent support to this notion, suggesting that regular family dinners may enhance parent-child communication over time (Fulkerson et al., 2010), as well as promote feelings of family connectedness (Franko et al., 2008). In addition, while dinner practices vary from family to family and between cultures, researchers have found that the more often adolescents join the family at the dinner table the less likely they are to engage in problem behaviours. For example, Fulkerson and colleagues (2006) demonstrated a consistent inverse relationship between the frequency of family dinners and adolescents’ reported participation in high-risk behaviours such as substance use (tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs) and early sexual activity. However, the contribution of family meal frequency on avoidance of high-risk behaviours may differ between boys and girls. Research by Sen (2010) revealed that family dinner frequency is associated with lower probabilities of smoking, alcohol consumption/binge drinking, and marijuana use for females and with decreased incidences of theft, physical fights, binge drinking, and marijuana use for males. Further, in a follow-up of middle-school students, Eisenberg and colleagues (2008) found that female adolescents reporting regular family meals were

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significantly less likely, 5 years later, to smoke cigarettes, use alcohol or marijuana than girls reporting infrequent family dinners, even after accounting for earlier substance use. Conversely, the influence of frequent family meals on substance use at follow-up was not observed for male adolescents. Taken together, these findings suggest that family dinner frequency may act as a protective factor in inhibiting or reducing youth involvement in high-risk behaviours, providing parents with a legitimate venue for influencing their children's behaviour.

Family Dinners and High-Risk Behaviours: Only a question of quantity?

Although the extant literature has focused on the impact of regular family dinners in reducing adolescent high-risk behaviours, little is known about exactly how family meals influence youth involvement in high-risk behaviours. Is the relationship between regular family meals and adolescent high-risk behaviours unidirectional? What specific aspects of family dinners are critical for reducing risky behaviours in youth? Are these characteristics of family dinners more beneficial for different subgroups of adolescents (males vs. females, at-risk youth vs. general population)? Preliminary research has revealed that family and meal-time characteristics other than family meal frequency have an important influence on adolescents' involvement in high-risk behaviours. Specifically, Franko and colleagues (2008) found that

family cohesion mediated the relationship between having family meals during preadolescence and adolescent daily smoking, suggesting that family meals enhance feelings of connectedness and may in turn reduce later high-risk behaviour. In addition, White and Halliwell (2010) demonstrated that it is adolescents' perception of the atmosphere during family dinners, rather than the frequency of family meals, that is associated with a lower probability of reported alcohol and tobacco use. The findings from this small body of research therefore underline the importance not only of establishing a pattern of regular family dinners, but also of developing a positive atmosphere at meal times that enhances family communication and connectedness. Nevertheless, future research is still needed to delineate the mechanisms by which family meals inhibit or reduce youth involvement in high-risk behaviours, including youth gambling participation. A better understanding of this association will be of immense value for the development of effective public education and intervention programs.

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The Impact of Teacher Perceptions on Student Gambling

By Katrina Smith, B.A. – International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

Today's youth live in an ever-changing, complicated world and face many challenges in their day-to-day lives. Helping them to navigate through their personal, social, educational and familial changes has become more difficult for parents and teachers. Previous research has shown that when adolescents and young adults encounter challenging or stressful situations, they may attempt to cope by escaping and engaging in high-risk behaviors and activities. Taking part in gambling activities is just one example of a high-risk behavior youth may engage in as a means of dealing with or coping with their stressful life changes. Compared with other high-risk behaviors youth could choose to take part in, such as alcohol, tobacco or drug use, gambling tends not to be viewed as seriously in terms of the negative effects it can have on adolescents and young adults.

It is quite common to see gambling-type activities used in schools as teaching aids, such as the use of dice and the lottery when teaching the topics of odds and probabilities in mathematics classes. In addition, poker or euchre tournaments tend to be quite regular occurrences in many high school cafeterias, along with various sports pools being run in classrooms. These activities tend to be viewed as seemingly fun ways to help engage students rather than actually being equated with gambling. It is clear there is a tendency toward normalizing forms of gambling within the school environment, and this can be harmful when attempts are made later to dissuade students

from engaging in gambling activities. Along with this inclusion of gambling at schools, there is also a cultural tendency in North America to embrace gambling, whether it is the media coverage of lottery winners, or the desire of many to visit Las Vegas casinos. Clearly, adolescents and young adults are receiving mixed messages about the impact of gambling.

From a public health perspective, there is growing concern that adolescents and young adults represent the highest risk group for gambling problems, thus necessitating the creation of more age-appropriate prevention initiatives (Messerlian, Derevensky, & Gupta, 2005). Prior studies have highlighted the discrepancy between the knowledge parents and teachers have concerning the prevalence of youth gambling and their desire to take part in prevention and training initiatives to learn more about the issue (Ladouceur, Ferland, Cote, & Vitaro, 2004). Research has also indicated that while parents, teachers and schools are informed and pro-active at targeting a wide range of high-risk behaviors their students may be participating in (smoking, drinking alcohol, drug use), there seems to be a lack of action in addressing the problem of youth gambling. The overall consensus suggests while teachers and parents are aware that gambling may be a problem that can negatively impact youth, they remain uninformed or minimally interested in the prevention and intervention programs available to help target this growing problem.

Among several on-going projects being conducted at The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors is a study examining teacher perceptions of youth gambling. The Centre has been involved in the development of a number of prevention initiatives, and in an effort to improve upon these initiatives, we are seeking to better understand teacher perceptions of student's risk-taking behaviors. The project, modeled after a similar national study conducted in 2009 which looked at parent's attitudes toward their own children's gambling behaviors, will survey teachers across various high schools in Ontario and Quebec.

The project will be conducted through the use of an online questionnaire that will be distributed to teachers of grades 7-12. The objective is to determine whether or not teachers perceive gambling as a high-risk behavior. Since teachers have an important impact upon the lives of their students, it is hoped that by better understanding their perceptions of student's risk-taking behaviors, more effective training and school-based prevention programs can be developed. It is also hoped that by taking part in this project, teachers will begin to understand the risks associated with excessive youth gambling.

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You People Are WEIRD! Thoughts on Weird Young People -- and Gambling Research

By Bo J. Bernhard, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Sociology and Hotel Management University of Nevada, Las Vegas

As a sociologist, I am weird.

More specifically, I am weird in this way: the world of problem gambling research is populated largely by psychologists who have very kindly allowed me to play alongside them. I find that this generosity of spirit is one of the psychology field's most endearing "personality traits," if you will.

As I pointed out in a keynote address to the US National Council on Problem Gambling conference several years ago, sociologists aren't exactly clamoring to actually go into the fields they study. They do not, as a general practice, offer to help the individual suffering souls they address - we'd rather theorize in the aggregate and study them from afar.

In contrast, here's a beautiful thing about psychology: psychologists devote their careers to understanding hurting populations, and then they take this understanding directly to the hurting, in a direct effort to ease their pain! In the world of academia, this is an increasingly rare and commendable commitment indeed. I myself have difficulty expressing the depths of my own gratitude to literally dozens upon dozens of kind psychologists who have helped me along my professional way. To the kids coming up these days, I always say this: you are lucky to be pursuing the problem gambling field, as it is filled with truly selfless souls who are willing and able to help you out.

At the same time (and didn't you just know a "but" was coming?!), in observing the dozens of problem gambling conferences that we have all attended over the years, I have also been struck by a certain naiveté on the part of psychology. It is a naiveté that rears its head often in conference settings. At the aforementioned keynote, I lamented our tendency to go to conferences and present our findings with certitude, and in a manner that seems to suggest that deep down, in the cognitive and affective ways that really matter, we are all really the same. It's as if now that we've conducted our experiments on gamblers in Nova Scotia, we now know how they will gamble in Bermuda and Beijing, Des Moines and Damascus. As a sociologist, this tendency struck me as neglectful of society, community, and culture - the "stuff of sociology," so to speak.

Worse, psychology research often relies upon studies of undergraduates - the field has been facetiously (but not inaccurately) labeled "Psychology of the 101 Student." These 101 student masses constitute a convenient sample, to be sure, but thinking back to our own college years, might we question whether 18-22 year olds really look like, act like, and think like the rest of the world? Despite my desire to forget, I remember my (weird) college sophomore self all too well, and I have trouble assuming that my "thinking" (a generous de-

scriptor if ever there was one!) in those days is generalizable to different peoples, places, epochs, and age groups today. This assumption that deep down, at the levels accessed by psychology research, we're all really the same - and hence that we might rest our beliefs in generalizability firmly upon our assumptions of universality - seems to make less and less sense in a rapidly globalizing 21st century.

Now, thanks to the increasingly famous work of an insightful Canadian psychologist and his team, we have research to support this kind of skepticism. Joseph Henrich of the University of British Columbia has attracted all kinds of attention for issuing a stern challenge to the entire field of psychology. After conducting a wide range of experiments all over the world, Henrich and his colleagues conclude "that people from Western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic (WEIRD) societies - and particularly American undergraduates - are some of the most psychologically unusual people on earth."¹

As a professor who deals with these "most psychologically unusual people on earth" for a living, this actually makes intuitive sense to me. I can attest that - no offense - students are weird!

Wonderfully, beautifully weird! If I may sound like a condescending educator for just a moment: if there is one thing that makes be-

ing a professor so rewarding, it might be the everyday engagement with young minds – minds that are dancing, navigating, and stumbling through a grown-up world that they are only beginning to understand. It's beautiful, but it's also weird – in the statistical rarity sense, at least.

What does this mean for psychology research? Well, according to Henrich's team, it turns out the fundamental attribution error is not so fundamental (nor universal). Instead, it appears reflective of sophomore (and sophomoric?) reasoning in America.² Nor is the field of psychology alone: some of the most heralded "advances" in economics have also been refuted by studies on non-Western populations who "rationally" think through experimental scenarios very differently than game theory insists that they do.

Could it be that we have been naively reliant upon the WEIRD?

And how might this apply to gambling studies, this "discovery" of the WEIRD? The possibilities are many: today we study a gambling world in which we hear that we cannot get Australian gamblers to get off electronic gambling machines, and yet we cannot get Chinese gamblers to get on them. If there is some underlying, universal cognitive tendency for humans to get "hooked" on these machines, why do they sit idly in massive casinos in Macau?

For that matter, anyone who has walked casino floors in Asia and casino floors in Las Vegas notices immediately the differences in the entire tone and vibe of these places. The single MGM Grand Casino in Macau goes through more card decks than all of the international

mega-corporation's other casinos combined. This is because gamblers in Macau insist upon holding, grabbing, and bending the cards in the superstitious belief that they can alter the card's properties (in Las Vegas, of course, you are usually allowed to look but not touch – in a decidedly anti-Vegas ruling, come to think of it!) As a result, card decks in Macau have to be tossed immediately after use, but Vegas decks live a relatively longer (and presumably happier) life. Gambling in Macau is also a much more serious, sober intellectual exercise for gamblers. As a result, alcohol is as conspicuously absent in gambling settings there as it is noticeably ubiquitous in Las Vegas (something that has to affect cognition, if my hazy recollections of my sophomore year are correct.)

These observations lead us to wonder about the oft-stated belief that "gambling is universal" – that it has been around since the dawn of time, and in all places, cultures, and eras. Heck, this is something that I have actually said numerous times, with professorial certitude and at podiums all over the planet. As the anthropologist Per Binde has shown, however, those of us who believe this are wrong: gambling has not evolved as universally as many assume. In fact, over the years some indigenous cultures have embraced gambling, while others have pretty much rejected it entirely.³

And yet, too often we assume epistemological and methodological universality in our research that purports to depict these gambling acts. Gambling has globalized at a wildfire pace, and those of us whose job it is to monitor it are now faced with a world that is literally a world – an almost entire

world of gamblers playing in an increasingly complex international playground. Meanwhile, our gambling research has become increasingly methodologically sophisticated, but one wonders whether it remains epistemologically naïve.

This would seem to be a major bummer to those of us who research the gambler -- this implication that diversity dictates that we jettison much of what we have done in favor of doing it again (or "replicating") in diverse locales and with diverse populations. In the eloquent calls of cultural anthropologists everywhere, though, we might choose to get excited about this diversity: we might try to view the weird as familiar, and the familiar as weird. Or as Henrich and his colleagues say to those who express frustration with his critical work: "to the contrary, this recognition illuminates a journey into human nature that is more exciting, more complex, and ultimately more consequential than has previously been suspected."

From this perspective, we are all weird now. Let us sound a call: weirdos of the (gambling research) world, unite!

¹For this quote and a fantastic summary of Henrich's work, see Henrich, P., Heine, S.J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. *Nature*. 466, p.1.

²I am very excited about using this question on my next final exam: "The Fundamental Attribution Error is neither fundamental, nor attributional, nor an error. Discuss."

³Binde, P. (2005). Gambling across cultures: Mapping worldwide occurrence and learning from ethnographic comparison. *International Gambling Studies*, 5, 1-27.

Dr. Bo Bernhard is an associate professor of sociology and hotel management at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he holds the title of Director of Gambling Research at UNLV's International Gaming Institute. ♦

Recent publications and presentations

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Faregh, N., & Derevensky, J. (in press). Gambling behavior among adolescents with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity disorder. *Journal of Gambling Studies*.

Felsher, J., Derevensky, J., & Gupta, R. (in press). Young adults with gambling problems: The impact of childhood maltreatment. *International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction*.

Huang, J-H., Jacobs, D., & Derevensky, J. (in press). DSM-based problem gambling: Increasing the odds of heavy drinking in a national sample of U.S. athletes. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*.

Olason, D.T., Kristjansdottir, E., Einarsdottir, H., Bjarnarson, G., & Derevensky, J. (in press). Internet gambling and problem gambling among 13 to 18 year old adolescents in Iceland. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Derevensky, J. (2010). Who is guarding the nest? Do regulators listen to researchers? Invited address presented at the European Association for the Study of Gambling Conference, Vienna, September.

Derevensky, J. (2010). Responsible gambling in the Internet world: Truth or fiction? Invited address presented at the Global iGaming Summit & Expo, Montreal, May. ◆

Upcoming Events

- **Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation's Responsible Gambling Conference**
October 4-5, 2010 - Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
- **Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey's 28th Annual Conference**
October 7, 2010 - Princeton, New Jersey, USA
- **Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling Annual Conference**
October 21, 2010 - Westbrook, Connecticut, USA
- **National Centre for Responsible Gaming's 11th Annual Conference on Gambling and Addiction**
November 14-15, 2010 - Las Vegas, Nevada, USA
- **National Association of Gambling Studies Australia 20th Annual Conference**
December 1-3, 2010 - Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia ◆



News from the Centre...

Centre Welcomes New Post Doctoral Fellow

The Centre is pleased to welcome Caroline Temcheff Ph.D., who joined the Centre as a Post Doctoral fellow in August 2010. Dr. Temcheff received her doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Concordia University. To date, her research has focused on longitudinal pathways from maladaptive behavioural patterns in childhood to patterns of risk-taking behaviour, family violence, and poor physical health in adulthood. She also has interest in factors that contribute to intergenerational transmission of health risk from parent to child.

While at the Centre, Dr. Temcheff hopes to expand on her interests in a variety of maladaptive and risk-taking behavioural problems, including issues related to gambling addiction. Examination of life course trajectories linking behavioural patterns in childhood, educational attainment and subsequent socio-economic status, and risk-taking behaviours will be one of her major research priorities within the Centre.

Since obtaining her Ph.D., Dr. Temcheff has also practiced as a clinical psychologist in the Royal Victoria Hospital and Douglas Mental Health University Institute. Clinically, she has particular interest in the public role of clinical psychologists in the prevention and treatment of adolescent and adult mental health problems, including depression, anxiety disorders, and gambling addictions.

Farewell

In August, the Centre said farewell to Will Shead, one of our Post Doctoral Fellows, who has taken a position as an Assistant Professor at Mount Saint Vincent in Nova Scotia. We wish him all the best of luck in his new position.

Another Centre Baby Boy

Congratulations to Jessica McBride and Chris Blonar on the birth of their adorable baby, Brenin Mac Blonar. The baby was born July 15, 2010, weighing 6 lbs 13 oz. Brenin is growing fast and keeping his parents busy! ♦



YGI Newsletter

A Quarterly Publication by the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors

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