

Gambling and Sports in a Global Age

Edited by

Darragh McGee
Christopher Bunn



Research in the
Sociology of Sport

VOL
18

GAMBLING AND SPORTS IN A GLOBAL AGE

RESEARCH IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT

Series Editor: Kevin Young

Recent Volumes:

- Volume 1: Theory, Sport and Society – Edited by Joseph Maguire and Kevin Young, 2001
- Volume 2: Sporting Bodies, Damaged Selves: Sociological Studies of Sports-Related Injury – Edited by Kevin Young, 2004
- Volume 3: The Global Olympics: Historical and Sociological Studies of the Modern Games – Edited by Kevin Young and Kevin B. Wamsley, 2005
- Volume 4: Tribal Play: Subcultural Journeys Through Sport – Edited by Michael Atkinson and Kevin Young, 2008
- Volume 5: Social and Cultural Diversity in a Sporting World – Edited by Chris Hallinan and Steven J. Jackson, 2008
- Volume 6: Qualitative Research on Sport and Physical Culture – Edited by Kevin Young and Michael Atkinson, 2012
- Volume 7: Native Games: Indigenous Peoples and Sports in the Post-Colonial World – Edited by Chris Hallinan and Barry Judd, 2013
- Volume 8: Sport, Social Development and Peace – Edited by Kevin Young and Chiaki Okada, 2014
- Volume 9: Sociology of Sport: A Global Subdiscipline in Review – Edited by Kevin Young, 2016
- Volume 10: Reflections on Sociology of Sport: Ten Questions, Ten Scholars, Ten Perspectives – Edited by Kevin Young, 2017
- Volume 11: Sport, Mental Illness, and Sociology – Edited by Michael Atkinson, 2018
- Volume 12: The Suffering Body in Sport: Shifting Thresholds of Pain, Risk and Injury – Edited by Kevin Young, 2019
- Volume 13: Sport and the Environment: Politics and Preferred Futures – Edited by Brian Wilson and Brad Millington, 2020
- Volume 14: Sport, Alcohol and Social Inquiry: A Global Cocktail – Edited by Sarah Gee, 2020

- Volume 15: Sport, Social Media and Digital Technology: Sociological Approaches – Edited by Jimmy Sanderson, 2022
- Volume 16: Doping in Sport and Fitness – Edited by April Henning and Jesper Andreasson, 2022
- Volume 17: Athletic Activism: Global Perspectives on Social Transformation – Edited by Jeffrey Montez de Oca and Stanley Thangaraj, 2023

This page intentionally left blank

RESEARCH IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT VOLUME 18

GAMBLING AND SPORTS IN A GLOBAL AGE

EDITED BY

DARRAGH MCGEE

University of Bath, UK

AND

CHRISTOPHER BUNN

University of Glasgow, UK



United Kingdom – North America – Japan
India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Emerald Publishing, Floor 5, Northspring, 21-23 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 4DL

First edition 2024

Editorial matter and selection © 2024 Darragh McGee and Christopher Bunn.

Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited.

Individual chapters © 2024 by Emerald Publishing Limited.

Chapter 9. Young women sports bettors in the UK: An overlooked demographic?, Copyright © 2024 Blair Biggar, Viktorija Kesaite, Daria Ukhova and Heather Wardle, is Open Access with copyright assigned to respective chapter authors.

Published by Emerald Publishing Limited.



These works are published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) licence.

Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of these works (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this licence may be seen at <http://creativecommons.org/licences/by/4.0/legalcode>



Open Access

The ebook edition of this title is Open Access and is freely available to read online.

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: www.copyright.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80117-305-6 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80117-304-9 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80117-306-3 (Epub)

ISSN: 1476-2854 (Series)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

CONTENTS

<i>About the Contributors</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>xiii</i>
Introduction: Towards a Sociology of Sports Gambling <i>Darragh McGee and Christopher Bunn</i>	<i>1</i>
Chapter 1 Historicising Sports Gambling <i>Mike Huggins</i>	<i>11</i>
Chapter 2 Brand Engagement in a Digital Age: Marketing Gambling to Newcastle United Fans <i>Robin Ireland</i>	<i>25</i>
Chapter 3 Data Ownership, Athlete Rights and the Global Sports Gambling Industry <i>Harry Bowles and Darragh McGee</i>	<i>41</i>
Chapter 4 The Production of Horse Racing in the Nordics <i>Virve Marionneau and Janne Nikkinen</i>	<i>57</i>
Chapter 5 Integrity Matters: Denormalising Gambling in Belgian and Dutch Sports Clubs <i>Bram Constandt</i>	<i>75</i>
Chapter 6 Football Betting Among University Students in Ghana <i>Joana Salifu Yendork, Kwaku Oppong Asante and Emmanuel Nii-Boye Quarshie</i>	<i>89</i>
Chapter 7 Conceptualising the Normalisation of Folk Religion in the Sports Betting Practices of Young Nigerians <i>Tunde Adebisi and Christopher Bunn</i>	<i>109</i>

Chapter 8 Where You Stand: Trust and Fixing in the Asian Sports Gambling Market	129
<i>Declan Hill</i>	
Chapter 9 Young Women Sports Bettors in the United Kingdom: An Overlooked Demographic?	145
<i>Blair Biggar, Viktorija Kesaite, Daria Ukhova and Heather Wardle</i>	
Chapter 10 The Impact of Marketing on the Normalisation of Gambling and Sport for Children and Young People	169
<i>Hannah Pitt, Simone McCarthy and Samantha Thomas</i>	
Afterword: Sociological Reflections on Gambling, Sport and Power	185
<i>Gerda Reith</i>	
<i>Index</i>	193

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Tunde Adebisi is a second-year PhD researcher at Ulster University. He is interested in Youth Culture and the key pathways, innovations, or strategies young people in Africa are developing or adopting to mitigate many challenges besieging their society. Probing the self-help activities of African youths may reveal important dynamics of youth culture in Africa.

Dr Kwaku Oppong Asante is an Associate Professor of Health Psychology and an experienced researcher in the University of Ghana and Research Associate in the Department of Psychology, University of the Free State, South Africa. His research interests focus on adolescent and young adults' mental health, adolescents in adversity and health promotion.

Dr Blair Biggar works across disciplines to explore inequalities with a focus on migration and gambling research. Blair has experience combining leadership roles in research, teaching and the third sector. He currently leads the Lancet Public Health Commission on Gambling's Lived Experience workstream and manages the Football Fans and Betting (FFAB) project.

Dr Harry Bowles is a Lecturer in the Department for Health at the University of Bath, UK. Harry has an established research profile in the sociology and of sport and physical education with specific research interests in the career transitional experiences of youth athletes, sport and the digital economy and commodification of young people's identities in the digital age.

Dr Christopher Bunn is a Senior Lecturer in sociology at the University of Glasgow and a senior social scientist at the Malawi Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit. His research examines the intersection of sports and gambling in the UK, Malawi and globally. Chris is a commissioner on the Lancet Public Health Commission on Gambling and a co-convenor for Gambling Realities Africa.

Dr Bram Constandt is an Assistant Professor in sports management at Ghent University, Belgium. His research focuses on responsible management and integrity issues in sports. He was awarded the 2020 ESMQ New Researcher Award by the European Association for Sport Management for his work on the normalisation of gambling in sports.

Dr Declan Hill is an Associate Professor of investigations at the University of New Haven. He specialises in the study of organised crime and corruption in international sport. His first book 'The Fix: Organised crime and soccer' tells the

story of Hill infiltrating a group of Asian match-fixers as they fixed matches at the World Cup.

Mike Huggins, University of Cumbria, is an Emeritus Professor of Cultural History at the University of Cumbria. He has published over a 100 refereed articles, book chapters and books on the history of sport and leisure, with a special interest in the role gambling has played in past horse racing, soccer and greyhound racing. He is a former President of the European Committee for Sports History, and he has received awards for his scientific studies from the British Society for Sports History and the International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport. His two most recent edited books are *A Cultural History of Sport in the Industrial Age* (Bloomsbury 2021) and (with Rob Hess) *Match Fixing and Sport: Historical Perspectives* (Routledge 2020).

Dr Robin Ireland is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, UK. He is also an Honorary Director of Research with the European Healthy Stadia Network. He was awarded his PhD by the University of Glasgow in 2021 with a thesis on the Commercial Determinants of Health in Sport. His book *Sport, Sponsorship and Public Health* was published in 2023.

Dr Viktorija Kesaite is a Research Associate at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Glasgow. Her research focuses on theoretical frameworks in gambling and testing these frameworks using secondary datasets. She completed her PhD in Health Economics at the University of Exeter.

Dr Virve Marionneau is a university researcher at the University of Helsinki Centre for Research on Addictions, Control, and Governance (CEACG). Her research focuses on gambling harms and the political economy of gambling.

Dr Simone McCarthy is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Deakin University working in the area of commercial determinants of health. She has received funding for gambling research from Deakin University, VicHealth, and the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

Dr Darragh McGee is a Senior Lecturer in the Department for Health at the University of Bath, UK. His research examines the sociocultural, technological and ethical issues surrounding gambling and young people, including the public health impacts of gambling in Sub-Saharan Africa. He has received funding from the British Academy, Leverhulme Trust and the Global Challenges Research Fund.

Dr Janne Nikkinen has dozens of academic publications about gambling, including several jointly authored and edited books (e.g. “Global gambling industry”, Springer 2022). His research interest related to gambling spans a range of issues, from regulatory and policy affairs to the prevention of gambling harm.

Dr Hannah Pitt is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute for Health Transformation at Deakin University, Australia. She has received funding for

gambling research from the Australian Research Council, Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, the NSW Office of Responsible Gambling, VicHealth and Deakin University.

Dr Emmanuel Nii-Boye Quarshie is a Community and Applied Health Psychologist by training and a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana. His research foci include the application of multi-ecological models to understanding and improving child and adolescent mental health, and self-harm and suicide prevention in resource-poor contexts.

Professor Gerda Reith is a Professor of Social Science at the University of Glasgow. She is a Commissioner on the Lancet Public Health Commission on Gambling, Co-Director of Gambling Research Glasgow at the University of Glasgow, and Co-Convenor of Gambling Realities Africa. Gerda's research focuses on the broad sociological and political-economic drivers of gambling. She has received funding from the National Institute for Health Research, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the British Academy to explore these themes. Her most recent book, *Addictive Consumption: Capitalism, Modernity and Excess*, analyses the origins and development of the commercial drivers of harmful consumption across a range of industries, including gambling.

Professor Samantha Thomas is a Professor of Public Health at Deakin University, Australia. She has received funding for gambling research from the Australian Research Council, Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, NSW Office of Responsible Gambling and Healthway WA. She is a member of the board of the International Confederation of Alcohol and Other Drug Research Associations and the Gambling Harm Prevention Advisory Board for Lotterywest.

Dr Daria Ukhova is a feminist social scientist with expertise in equitable health and social policy development. She currently leads policy analysis for Lancet Public Health Commission on Gambling. Daria was a co-author of the WHO's 2016 report *Women's health and well-being in Europe: beyond the mortality advantage*.

Professor Heather Wardle is a Professor of gambling research and policy and policy at the University of Glasgow. She co-directs Gambling Research Glasgow, a collective of gambling researchers based at the University of Glasgow (www.grg.scot). She is Co-chair of the Lancet Public Health Commission on Gambling and former Deputy Chair of the British Advisory Board on Safer Gambling. Her book 'Games without Frontiers? Socio-historical perspectives at the gaming/gambling intersection' was published in 2021.

Dr Joana Salifu Yendork is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Psychology, University of Ghana. Her research interests centre on child and adolescent mental health with a particular focus on vulnerable populations such as orphans, adolescents in stepfamilies, sexually abused adolescents, adolescent girls in child marriage and youth in gambling.

This page intentionally left blank

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

<i>Emmanuel Nii-Boye Quarshie</i>	University of Ghana, Ghana
<i>Tunde Adebisi</i>	Ulster University, UK
<i>Kwaku Oppong Asante</i>	University of Ghana, Ghana
<i>Blair Biggar</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Harry Bowles</i>	University of Bath, UK
<i>Christopher Bunn</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Bram Constandt</i>	Ghent University, Belgium
<i>Declan Hill</i>	University of New Haven, USA
<i>Mike Huggins</i>	University of Cumbria, UK
<i>Robin Ireland</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Viktorija Kesaite</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Virve Marionneau</i>	University of Helsinki, Finland
<i>Simone McCarthy</i>	Deakin University, Australia
<i>Darragh McGee</i>	University of Bath, UK
<i>Janne Nikkinen</i>	University of Helsinki, Finland
<i>Hannah Pitt</i>	Deakin University, Australia
<i>Gerda Reith</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Samantha Thomas</i>	Deakin University, Australia
<i>Daria Ukhova</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Heather Wardle</i>	University of Glasgow, UK
<i>Joana Salifu Yendork</i>	University of Ghana, Ghana

This page intentionally left blank

INTRODUCTION: TOWARDS A SOCIOLOGY OF SPORTS GAMBLING

Darragh McGee and Christopher Bunn

In 2017, British gambling firm, bet365, released an advert featuring celebrity actor and ‘brand ambassador’, Ray Winstone, walking through a dimly lit snooker hall, with a smartphone in hand, as a maze of holographic pop-ups display live scores, statistics and betting odds. Spliced between cutaway scenes featuring a diverse cast of sports fans similarly fixated on their smartphone in a wide range of everyday locales – including a pub, a barber shop, a restaurant and a beach – Winstone triumphantly heralds the coming of a global age of sports gambling:

You can find us in every corner of the world. Watching, listening, analysing. We are everywhere, we see everything. We are members of the world’s largest sports betting company, and we gamble responsibly at bet365.com.

Terraformed by rapid innovations in the digital economy and the mass market democratisation of access to the smart technologies, this so-called ‘gamblification’ of sport has seen a new wave of online betting companies – including bet365, which was founded in 2000 – invest in the strategic alignment of their brands with culturally valued sports teams, competitions, athletes and media (Bunn et al., 2018, pp. 1–12; Deans, Thomas, Daube, & Deverensky, 2017; Lopez-Gonzalez & Griffiths, 2018; McGee, 2020; Nyemcsok et al., 2018; Pitt, Thomas, Bestman, Stoneham, & Daube, 2016). In keeping with Winstone’s claims of global connection, this distinctly techno-capitalist turn has seen the act of sports betting promoted and rationalised as an entertainment form which extends fan engagement and amplifies the cultural salience of sport not merely as a competitive pursuit but as a vehicle for speculative modes of consumptive ‘play’.

Few arenas of the global leisure economy can match the expansive spirit and extractive zeal that has characterised the growth and ‘manufacture’ (Cassidy, 2014a) of the sports gambling industry. As a case in point, the market

capitalisations of bet365 alone reached a pre-pandemic peak of £2.98 billion from an estimated 35 million consumers in 2019 (Barber, 2019). The founder and CEO, Denise Coates, has also been widely heralded as one of the world's highest paid executives with an annual remuneration package worth £323 million across the same period (Davies, 2021). If any further evidence were needed to bolster Winstone's claims of the brand's global omnipresence, bet365 also offer live streaming of 140,000 sporting events per year across more than 70 countries in 'every corner of the world'.

By no means a monopoly, however, bet365 are but one of a staggering array of gambling firms which have commandeered digital technologies as a catalyst for market growth and diversification. The pace of this technological shift has far exceeded the analogue design of state regulation, with many neoliberal-inspired governments torn between the need for containment and the benefits of revenue generation. In 2018, the US Supreme Court overturned a nationwide ban on sports betting, paving the way for a rapid formation of legalised markets in 36 states. Canada followed suit in March 2021, when the province of Ontario issued licences to prominent global operators including BetMGM, Unibet and bet365. Heralded as a solution to economic stagnation, this North American 'gambling boom' mirrors a trend towards liberalisation and deregulation across the Global South, including Sub-Saharan African territories where the uptake and popularity of sports betting has been expedited by the allied export of European football, especially in sports bars or what Akindes (2011) terms 'trans-local' stadia (Bunn, Mtema, Songo, & Udedi, 2020; Chiweshe, 2020; Sichali et al., 2022).

Not without resistance, however, the unprecedented growth of commercial gambling markets has engendered growing public concern, much of which is tethered to the wider societal disruption engendered by myriad new technologies (Foroohar, 2019; Pedersen, Albris, & Seaver, 2021; Schüll, 2012). Policymakers and academics alike have urged caution about a digital turn that has transformed human-material relations in ways that monetise attention, subvert human agency and radically alter the everyday management of risk and social identity (Lupton, 2014). Beyond this want on commodification of attention and desire, there has also been explicit scrutiny of how the extractive techniques of online gambling firms are characteristic of a shift to a surveillance economy (Zuboff, 2019), one where invasive algorithms mine vast quantities of personal data to guide ever-more manipulative models of consumer profiling and persuasive design. And yet, for many, the spectre of this digital gambling ecosystem manifests most visibly in the proliferation of adverts that, like the bet365 example, endorse the societal normalisation of gambling as a natural, if not essential, accompaniment to consuming sport.

Liberated from the burden of 'bricks-and-mortar' casinos, racetracks and betting shops, a new wave of online gambling operators have targeted sport as a conduit for the 'soft' insertion of their brands into the cultural mainstream. This relentless commodification of the sporting commons has centred on authentic scenes and cherished sites, including naming rights to historic stadia, sponsorship of community-anchored football clubs and fan events, and 'brand ambassador'

agreements with high-profile athletes. It has also been evident in the popular embrace of a gambling-oriented nomenclature, particularly the embrace of ‘odds talk’ as a medium for fan engagement and peer interaction with live sport (McGee, 2020; Raymen & Smith, 2017). This blurring distinction between sport fandom and gambling has resulted in a globalised form of digital leisure that is unburdened by the limits of time, space or the local sporting calendar.

To endeavour towards a sociology of this shifting global assemblage of sports gambling is a confounding yet exhilarating task. It is confounding, quite literally, in that the dominant frames through which gambling has long been rendered knowable, beyond the hegemony that the industry itself enjoys, have come principally from the psychiatric, epidemiological and behavioural sciences (Reith, 2007; Schüll, 2012). These approaches have operationalised large scale measures of prevalence, quantifying and categorising gambling with the express aim of identifying risk factors underpinning disordered behaviours (Cassidy, 2014b). Coincident with this medical pathology model has been the emergence and proliferation of ‘problem gambling’, and its corollary, ‘responsible gambling’ (Newall et al., 2022), as the prevailing paradigms for understanding ‘addiction’ as an aggressively individualised condition rooted in human deficiency, deviance and irresponsibility (Cassidy, 2014b; Reith, 2012, 2013). Industry-funding streams have in turn elevated these staple tropes to the core of the status quo in studies of gambling (Cassidy, 2014b), setting the terms of discursive entry and narrowing the range of topics examined in what became a rigidly siloed, if not politically fractured, ‘field’ (Orford, 2019).

Critical alternatives have been proposed, notably the emergence of public health perspectives. Such perspectives push back against the deterministic and individualising tendencies of the ‘problem gambling’ paradigm, arguing that we should instead address ‘gambling harms’ (Reith, Wardle, & Gilmore, 2019; Van Schalkwyk, Cassidy, McKee, & Petticrew, 2019; Wardle, Reith, Langham, & Rogers, 2019) in order to re-politicise the debate by drawing attention to the how strategies of industry actors propagate social injustice. Imbued with an urgent imperative to counter industry tactics, this population-level approach has been effective in generating ‘evidence’ that rationally calculates the environmental and structural drivers of gambling harms and the ‘miasma of risk’ (Reith, 2007, p. 47) posed to ‘vulnerable’ demographic groupings, including children and young people. Over time, the remit of such a public health approach has been progressively extended such that, even where sociologists have entered the field, they have often elected to pursue research geared towards applied or interventionist ends.

For all the merit of this critical thread, there are myriad ways in which a nuanced sociological approach can diversify and deepen extant understandings of sports gambling. It holds the potential, firstly, to extend the epistemic parameters of what types of questions can legitimately be asked. Moving beyond resistance to pathologising tropes and a priori assumptions about gambling as vice, sociologists are well placed to recognise that the games we play do not unfold in a vacuum but are densely significant ‘social’ forms laden with meaning and imaginaries that transcend the act itself. By asking why we play and what is at stake in any gambling exchange, sporting or otherwise, we are moved to consider

in novel ways the dominant idioms and technologies around which social life orbits at any one time. Taking this idea seriously has the potential to open up a rich tapestry of untold histories and new points of vantage onto the human condition in all its intricate complexity.

As a starting point, this necessitates critical reflection on the analytic blind spots and vested hierarchies that meant sociology, and social theory more broadly, have remained marginal to the dominant ways of knowing in gambling studies. Akin to how McGowan (2004) pointedly asked ‘how do we know what we know?’ about the gambling field as a whole two decades ago, it is timely to ask why we know remarkably little about the genealogies of gambling and sport in particular regions, and how we might go about interrogating the political economy, promotional culture and regulatory regimes that have facilitated their commercial merger as an extractive global industry. And yet, the genesis of a discrete sociological sub-field will be richer for its interdisciplinary encounters, including with the wider biological, psychological and technological realms which inflect the design, manufacture and consumption of sports gambling products today.

Mercifully, there is abundant inspiration to be found across the spectrum of the social sciences, not least from a richly interpretive discourse on gambling itself (Cassidy, 2020; Cassidy, Pisac, & Loussouarn, 2013; Nicoll, 2019; Reith, 2018). While rarely focused explicitly on sports gambling, this critical tradition nevertheless points to many of the key coordinates of a sociological sub-field. By virtue of their ethnographic approach, the anthropological contributions of Cassidy (2014a, 2020) and Schüll (2012) have been particularly influential in emphasising the social contingencies of gambling within late capitalist societies. For Cassidy (2020), this involved tracing how the deep associational lineage between thoroughbred horse racing and bookmaking gave way to an online gambling industry eager to appeal to younger demographics and new sporting domains, especially football. In so doing, Cassidy demonstrates that the societal ubiquity of commercial gambling today is tethered not to the natural ‘evolution’ of a book-making craft that is often claimed as a mainstay of British culture but to a global and ‘manufactured’ set of extractive ideologies and (neo)liberal forms of governance.

This backdrop is also evident in Schüll’s (2012) influential book, *Addiction by Design: Machine Gambling in Las Vegas*, which tracks back and forth between the design architecture of casino slot machines and the phenomenological experience of gamblers, forensically piecing together how these immersive environments are created to entrap and delude gamblers in a world-dissolving addictive state she terms the ‘machine zone’. Far from an asocial activity unsuited to cultural analysis, Schüll interrogates what fellow anthropologist, Anthony Pickles (2014, p. 215) terms the ‘human-material nexus’ between gambler’s experience and the array of machines, objects and technologies with which they interact (Schüll, 2005). Like Cassidy, the footprint of Schüll’s (2012, p. 21) work reaches far beyond Las Vegas casinos, motioning us to critically appraise how the story of ‘problem gamblers’ is also a story of ‘problem machines, problem environments and problem business practices’.

Reaching back further, the anthropological and sociological domains have sporadically embraced the idea that ludic forms, if not gambling directly, might carry clues as to the central preoccupations, dispositions and dramaturgy of a culture. Certainly, Roger Caillois (1961) posited as much in his treatise on how modern culture was characterised by the popularity of games involving a tension between *agon* and *alea* – two elements of play, the former demanding an assertion of will, the latter demanding surrender to chance. In 1973, Clifford Geertz also memorably observed the Balinese practice of cockfighting as a site wherein wider social and symbolic dimensions of life played out in ritualised fashion. For Geertz, the act of gambling on the cockfight served as a ‘tournament of prestige’, allowing men and their gamecocks (which served as ‘symbolic expressions or magnifications of their owner’s self’) to rehearse the status dynamics of wider society in microcosm (Geertz, 2005).

Such nuanced analyses of interactional dynamics and their wider symbolism are also explicit in the far-reaching oeuvre of Erving Goffman. Proclaimed as a ‘gambling sociologist’ of ‘canonical’ standing (Cosgrave, 2016), Goffman’s penchant for card counting in Las Vegas casinos gave rise to a rich array of sociological metaphors, concepts and frames for gambling, which he regarded as sites of heroic and ‘fateful’ action. For Cosgrave (2016, p. 103), a Goffmanian sociology, ranging from his analyses of fatefulness (Goffman, 1967) and stigma (Goffman, 1963) to the social management of risk and the dramaturgy of self-presentation, holds rich analytic potential for understanding the everyday significance of sports gambling in all its consumptive and addictive manifestations. The same might be said of the wider sociological canon, as well as more recent post-structuralist and postmodern turns, which remain curiously under-explored. Reith’s (2018) *Addictive Consumption: Capitalism, Modernity and Excess* is, then, particularly timely in its thoroughly sociological interrogation of how prevailing discourses of addiction conceal and contradict, fuelling desire and reconfiguring responsibility according to the ideals of consumer capitalism.

Collectively, these diverse intellectual threads offer but a glimpse of the conceivable future directions which a sociology of sports gambling might take and how it will confront the challenge posed by the global constellation of material, technological and political-economic conditions out of which commercial gambling markets expand and diversify. Ensuring the ‘social’ is foregrounded will also necessitate a simultaneous commitment to understanding the lived relations and contingencies that emerge in and through a diverse array of everyday encounters. Thankfully, there are more established sociological sub-fields to lean on, not least the extensive body of research in the sociology of sport offers invaluable insight into the commodifying thrust of a sports media–entertainment complex and its uneven social gradient. To cherry-pick but a few in addition, the sociology of leisure, health and illness, globalisation and digital technology, as well as scholarship concerned with consumption, risk and promotional culture all have much to impart on what we might learn sociologically about sports gambling and how we might go about learning it.

This edited volume aims to provide a point of departure towards these exhilarating analytic possibilities. Taken individually, each article speaks to the

differentiated ways in which commercial sports gambling markets have expanded their reach, often into new territories and cultural milieus. While drawing from a diverse array of original empirical analyses and applied perspectives, they illuminate a vibrant if at times invidious portrait of a sports gambling industry that, according to bet365's Ray Winstone, is 'watching, listening and analysing' in every corner of the world.

Mike Huggins opens the collection with a timely reminder that the relationship between gambling and sport has a long associational lineage despite the relative dearth of historical accounts. Tracing the cultural genealogy of their entwinement, he unpacks the shifting social and commercial meaning engendered by sports betting, or 'wagering', including the manifold ways in which it was contoured by social class and gender, across distinct historical moments. Huggins also historicises the terms of engagement between sport, state and society, reminding us that earlier forms of sports betting frequently became flashpoints for class and religious conflict over the need to control what was at times considered a morally corrupting activity.

Robin Ireland's chapter explores the commercial extension of gambling brand, FUN88, via a sponsorship agreement with Premier League football club, Newcastle United. Reaching beyond mere brand positioning, he interrogates how FUN88 evoke the cultural traditions of the club in efforts to engage and create meaningful forms of connection with the club's fan base. Crucially, Ireland proceeds to incisively unpick how such corporate brand strategies embed and normalise the consumptive ethic of gambling within cultures of fandom, while simultaneously devolving responsibility for any harms engendered by their products.

Harry Bowles and Darragh McGee shed light on how a 'data revolution' has been a catalyst for the growth and expansion of the sports gambling industry. Tethered to the rapid embrace of digital technologies and data use in sport, they raise timely concerns over privacy, athlete rights and the ownership of personal data, including the role of gambling firms in the commercial extraction, trade and exchange of human data as a commodity. Through a critical walkthrough of the issues and the pressing urgency for sociological inquiry, they show how this 'datafication' of sports gambling is bound up with the emergence of new forms of organisational, political and corporate surveillance.

Virve Marionneau and Janne Nikkinen's chapter excavates the historical significance of horse racing in Nordic society, as well as the cultural and economic rationales used to distinguish its exceptional status, even necessity, from that of sports betting in general. Juxtaposing the valorised construct of the horse in Nordic culture with the emerging discourse on animal rights and welfare, they reveal the shifting imperatives that shape the production of horse-racing in the contemporary moment.

Refocusing the analytical gaze towards youth sport, Bram Constandt's chapter examines the role of sports clubs as a vital yet underexplored actor in the societal normalisation of gambling. Drawing on empirical data addressing the role of sports clubs in Belgium and the Netherlands, Constandt critically interrogates normative conceptions of integrity as a legal construct before proposing

an alternative schema in which sports clubs hold a wider duty of care and thereby could assume an active role in ‘denormalising’ gambling for a new generation of young people.

Joana Yendork, Kwaku Opong Asante and Emmanuel Nii-Boye extend this youth focus, albeit via a quantitative analysis of the uptake and perceived salience of sports gambling practices among university students in Ghana. They offer novel insights on the tension between leisure and livelihood in youth constructs of sports gambling as a potential source of income generation in contexts of labour precarity and unemployment.

Tunde Adebisi and Christopher Bunn in turn diversify the picture of sports gambling in West Africa by illuminating its entwinement with the rites and practices of folk religion in Nigeria. Anchored in richly empirical insights from young people and folk doctors in the city of Ilorin, Kwara State, they reveal how the turn to a combination of folk practices and sports gambling must be read against the unfavourable economic conditions in which young people are forced to navigate aspirations and imaginaries of future.

Declan Hill’s chapter subsequently analyses the size, structure and operational ecosystem through which the oft-overlooked Asian gambling market functions before turning to the spectre of match-fixing. Through a critical walkthrough of the blurred lines between legal and illegal conceptions of gambling, he explores links between sport, gambling and organised crime, making a case that a globalised network of sports corruption as a result of economic disparities and a lack of robust governance.

Addressing the relative dearth of gender-based analyses, Blair Bigger, Viktorija Kesaite, Daria Ukhova and Heather Wardle present findings from a quantitative analysis of the characteristics of young women who participate in sports gambling. Beyond a demographic mapping, they take aim at the ingrained assumptions that have long rendered women marginal to, if not invisible, within gambling analyses primarily centred on masculine experiences.

Finally, Hannah Pitt, Simone McCarthy and Samantha Thomas critically interrogate the growing cultural visibility and sophistication of gambling-related branding and marketing campaigns, many of which hold strong appeal to children and young people. Drawing together critical frameworks from sociology and public health, they deconstruct how ‘responsible gambling’ messaging is configured as part of an industry-friendly paradigm emphasising individual responsibility over commercial accountability and consumer protection.

REFERENCES

- Akandes, G. A. (2011). Football bars: Urban sub-Saharan Africa’s trans-local stadiums. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28(15), 2176–2190.
- Barber, B. (2019, December 16). Turnover and profits soar as bet365 post strong set of accounts. *Racing Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.racingpost.com/news/turnover-and-profits-soar-as-bet365-powers-ahead-aNEUL0B78rLG/>
- Bunn, C., Ireland, R., Minton, J., Holman, D., Philpott, M., & Chambers, S. (2018). Shirt sponsorship by gambling companies in the English and Scottish Premier Leagues: Global reach and public health concerns. *Soccer & Society*.

- Bunn, C., Mtema, O., Songo, J., & Udedi, M. (2020). The growth of sports betting in Malawi: Corporate strategies, public space and public health. *Public Health, 184*, 95–101.
- Caillois, R. (1961). *Man, play, and games* (Barash M., Trans.). Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press. (Original work published in 1958).
- Cassidy, R. (2014a). Afterword: Manufacturing gambling. *Oceania, 84*, 306–314.
- Cassidy, R. (2014b). Fair game? Producing and publishing gambling research. *International Gambling Studies, 14*, 345–353.
- Cassidy, R. (2020). *Vicious games: Capitalism and gambling*. London: Pluto Press.
- Cassidy, R., Pisac, A., & Loussouarn, C. (2013). *Qualitative research in gambling: Exploring the production and consumption of risk*. London: Routledge.
- Chiweshe, M. (2020). Playing the odds: The rise of soccer betting houses as a livelihood option in Harare, Zimbabwe. *Soccer and Society, 21*(3), 344–355. doi:10.1080/14660970.2019.1671828
- Cosgrave, J. (2016). Doubling down on Goffman: A commentary on Dmitri Shalin's 'Erving Goffman, fateful action, and the Las Vegas gambling scene'. *UNLV Gaming Research and Review Journal, 20*(1). Retrieved from <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/grrj/vol20/iss1/7>
- Davies, R. (2021, March 31). Bet365 boss's £421m pay for 2020 takes earnings over £1bn in four years. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/mar/31/bet365-boss-denise-coates-pay-may-exceed-1bn-in-four-years>
- Deans, E., Thomas, S., Daube, M., & Deverensky, J. (2017). The role of peer influences on the normalisation of sports wagering: A qualitative study of Australian men. *Addiction Research and Theory, 25*(2), 103–113. doi:10.1080/16066359.2016.1205042
- Foroohar, R. (2019). *Don't be Evil: The case against big tech*. Allen Lane.
- Geertz, C. (2005). Deep play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight. *Dædalus, 134*(4), 56–86. doi:10.1162/001152605774431563
- Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face behavior*. New York, NY: Doubleday Anchor.
- Lopez-Gonzalez, H., & Griffiths, M. D. (2018). Understanding the convergence of markets in online sports betting. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 53*(7), 807–823. doi:10.1177/1012690216680602
- Lupton, D. (2014). Beyond techno-utopia: Critical approaches to digital health technologies. *Societies, 4*, 706–711. doi:10.3390/soc4040706
- McGee, D. (2020). On the normalisation of online sports gambling among young adult males in the UK: A public health perspective. *Public Health, 184*, 89–94. doi:10.1016/j.puhe.2020.04.018
- McGowan, V. (2004). How do we know what we know: Epistemic tensions in social and cultural research on gambling, 1980–2000. *Journal of Gambling Issues, 11*.
- Newall, P. W. S., Rockloff, M., Hing, N., Browne, M., Thorne, H., Russell, A. M. T., & Armstrong, T. (2022). How do academics, regulators, and treatment providers think that safer gambling messages can be improved? *Addiction Research and Theory*. doi:10.1080/16066359.2022.2148663
- Nicoll, F. (2019). *Gambling in everyday life: Spaces, moments and products of enjoyment*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nyemcsok, C., Thomas, S. L., Bestman, A., Pitt, H., Daube, M., & Cassidy, R. (2018). Young people's recall and perceptions of gambling advertising and intentions to gamble on sport. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions, 7*(4), 1068–1078. doi:10.1556/2006.7.2018.128
- Orford, J. (2019). *The gambling establishment: Challenging the power of the modern gambling industry and its Allies*. London: Routledge.
- Pedersen, M. A., Albris, K., & Seaver, N. (2021). The political economy of attention. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 50*, 309–325.
- Pickles, A. (2014). Introduction: Gambling as analytic in Melanesia. *Oceania, 84*(3), 207–221. doi:10.1002/ocea.5057
- Pitt, H., Thomas, S., Bestman, A., Stoneham, M., & Daube, M. (2016). 'It's just everywhere' children and parents discuss the marketing of sports betting in Australia. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 40*(5), 480–486.