

Social Marketing Quarterly

<http://smq.sagepub.com/>

Fun, Friend, or Foe: Youth Perceptions and Definitions of Online Gambling

Margee Hume and Gillian Sullivan Mort
Social Marketing Quarterly 2011 17: 109
DOI: 10.1080/15245004.2010.546939

The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://smq.sagepub.com/content/17/1/109>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:

NSMC



FHI360



Additional services and information for *Social Marketing Quarterly* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://smq.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://smq.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

Citations: <http://smq.sagepub.com/content/17/1/109.refs.html>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Mar 1, 2011

[What is This?](#)

Fun, Friend, or Foe: Youth Perceptions and Definitions of Online Gambling

MARGEE HUME AND GILLIAN SULLIVAN MORT

ABSTRACT

This article discusses youth consumption of high-speed Internet technology and online youth gambling based on examination of an Australian youth and young adults sample ranging in age from 13 to 30 years of age. This article explores the impact of online gambling on youth well-being and presents organization of the issues confronting youth and gambling behavior online. The article covers current research related to youth and offers a set of narrative definitions of online gambling as offered by 175 youth and young adults. Coupled with this, is a set of industry comments from Australian gambling sector representatives related to this cohort; these offer clarity on how this cohort interacts with current online gambling service providers. There is no doubt that youth underestimate the possible dangers of online gambling and define gambling and online gambling in terms of fun and gaming rather than fully appreciating the risks related to gambling. It is evident there is some legislation and practice protocols ranging in effectiveness that assist in minimizing the access of youth to online gambling.

Introduction

This article examines youth consumption of high-speed Internet technology and online gambling and the impact on youth well-being and presents taxonomy of the issues confronting youth gambling online. The article presents current research related to youth and offers a set of 175 narrative definitions of online gambling. With the advent of increased speed and capability of Internet provision, interest in youth anxiety and stress resulting from gambling online has been evident in media reports. Issues including addiction, depression, financial loss, pleasure

seeking, excessive hours online gambling, and their impact on school, work, and relationships are proposed as the negative impacts of online gambling.

This work addresses these and their impact on youth and society by conducting research to ascertain the youth perception and definition of gambling online within an Australian youth cohort. Much confusion surrounds the understanding of gambling in the youth cohort. Issues such as the role of skill and chance in gambling, the positioning of gambling as a sin, and the social and fun perceptions of gambling have been little explored in youth gambling behavior and warrant discovery. This article offers coverage of the literature including the online consumption patterns of youth and the outcomes of engaging in online gambling and their influence on youth well-being. It then investigates the perception and definitions of Internet gambling in the 10–30-year-old age group with specific definitions and narratives as perceived by this group of “what is online gambling.” Problem and pathological practices are also offered. The article concludes with reflections for future research related to these perceptions and definitions.

This cohort is vulnerable to the positive and negative effects of gambling and addiction, and recent literature suggests that the earlier the onset of gambling behavior the more likely problem gambling will result (Gambling Research Australia, 2005, p. 7). There are many definitions used for “problem” gambling in the literature including problem, pathological, and compulsive being the most common terms. Problem gambling is frequently used, particularly in North America, to denote a level of gambling at an earlier stage or which leads to fewer problems than at the later stage. At the later stage more severe problems are experienced or caused by those gamblers who are clinically diagnosed as pathological gamblers. In Australia, the term problem gambler tends to encompass gamblers who are experiencing problems but who do not meet the diagnostic criteria of pathological gambling (Gambling Research Australia, 2005, p. 7).

This project informs research and provides an evidence base for youth-related gambling policy. By developing a greater understanding of how online gambling and gambling in general is defined and perceived by youth, this research supports social change strategies and social and welfare support of this cohort. As such, this research offers some foundation for research into youth online gambling. Apart from some recent media attention, research into the negative impacts of online gambling is in its infancy. The little research conducted has focused on extreme behaviors online (Finn, 2005; Gibson, 2009), addiction, depression, and youth mental issues (Finn, 2005; Petry & Weinstock, 2007). Less extreme behaviors also warrant attention.

Literature Review

Online gambling and youth

Forecasts suggest that over the next 5 years, mobile phone gambling will see a marked increase in popularity among mobile phone users worldwide, with Asia-Pacific and Europe contributing more than 75% of mobile gambling expenditure (Gibson, 2009). Forecasts of this nature position research into protecting our youth and creating safer environments within the online and mobile gambling industry as essential. The advantage of using the mobile phone as a platform for gambling application includes the anywhere/anytime availability and the ease of access (Gibson, 2009) which enables impulsive usage. The increased use of the mobile phone for gambling will only be restricted by market constraints, such as regulation, social acceptability, and robust user controls (Gibson, 2009).

An area of current concern relates to the use of faster broadband Internet technology for the purposes of gambling online and the usage and impact of this on young people. Access to Internet (broadband) services and mobile Internet technology for consumption of online interactive technology services is increasing rapidly with the youth demographic. The diffusion and adoption of online technology and Internet access has been particularly widespread among adolescents and young adults in Australia. Fully 72% own mobile phones (Wajcman, Bittman, Jones, Johnstone, & Brown, 2007) with services offering varieties of Internet, 3G, and broadband access and 70.4% of the population currently has access to Internet services (15,045,473 Internet users as of March 2007). Of these, 87% are aged between 0–65, [0–14 years: 19.8% (male 2,116,875/female 1,943,563) and 15–64 years: 67.2% (male 7,085,692/female 6,695,189)] (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/sp/au.htm#demo>). The 10–18-year-old age group and the 19–30-year-old age group are the target of this report as they are representative of youth with high technological efficacy.

While problem gambling has been primarily thought of as an adult problem, there is a growing body of empirical evidence to support examining problem gambling during adolescence (Delfabbro & Thrupp, 2003). There is little doubt that gambling and wagering remains a popular activity among both children and adolescents with this popularity suggested to be on the rise (Gibson, 2009). It is evident that these groups are interacting with many different types of games of skill and chance that form the scope of gambling (Abbott, Cramer, & Sherrets, 1995; Downs & Woolrych, 2009).

There is a consensus in the literature concerning why youth gamble with considerable variability and report the prevalence rates of youth *problem* gambling.

More recently, issues concerning the possible overestimation of these rates have been raised (Derevensky, Gupta, & Winters, 2003; Moore & Ohtsuka, 1997). While some discrepancies may be attributable to differences among assessment instruments, sample groups, and definitions of gambling based solely on the legislated definition of gambling, not all games of skill and games of chance may play a role in the findings. Researchers have tended to find similar rates of problem/pathological gambling for older adolescents (age 17 through 19) comparing different instruments on the same sample suggesting these rates are generalizable. With limited research conducted in younger adolescents and their exposure and interaction with games of skill and games of chance, it is difficult to decipher the causes of the mixed findings. More rigorous and empirical research focused in the area of youth exposure and interaction with gambling is warranted.

There is need for the development and refinement of criterion for adolescent problem gambling and clarity of nomenclature factors related to youth gambling to improve measurement and consistency in policy development. Advancing knowledge concerning the underlying risk factors associated with the onset and course of youth gambling involvement and the role of effective adolescent prevention and treatment programs continues to be an important consideration for governments, parents, carers, and schools (Derevensky et al., 2003) and warrants support.

Online gambling in Australia

Previous Australian studies (Moore & Ohtsuka, 1997) have revealed a strong youth interest in gambling in Australia, as reflected in current participation levels, future intentions, and attitudes. Embedded in much of this attitudinal research is that youth gambling is influenced by the familial, social, and cultural norms to which young people are exposed. Parental acceptance and involvement in gambling reduces barriers to gambling and creates an environment of acceptance of gambling behavior. Youth understanding about money, risk, saving, and family attitudes and participation toward gambling are proposed as interrelated aspects of youth gambling, its adoption and rejection. Interestingly, gambling research into motivations suggest two theories underpin the triggers of gambling: arousal and cognitive theory. Arousal theory offers an explanation for the need to seek excitement, with cognitive theory related to the assessment of gain and loss (Derevensky et al., 2003). Advancing this and derived from other motivational theories, three types of gambling motivation have been identified including intrinsic motivation (IM), extrinsic motivation (EM), and amotivation. IM includes motivations like curiosity, developing skills in a betting

activity, and excitement or entertainment; EM involves positive and negative reinforcement: money, relaxation, and socializing (Derevensky et al., 2003). Finally, amotivation relates to drivers that are neither internally or externally motivated (Downs & Woolrych, 2009).

A previous school survey of 505 adolescents (aged 15–17 years) showed that over 60% of adolescents were gambling annually and that 3.5% scored in the problematic range (Moore & Ohtsuka, 1997). These results suggest this cohort requires further investigation. It is indisputable that “young people” are of particular interest as they are considered to be especially at risk for problem gambling due to their need to satisfy internal motivations with limited ability to cognitively understand the risks (Abbott et al., 1995; Downs & Woolrych, 2009).

General gambling behaviors in this group appear associated with parental and peer gambling and progambling attitudes, with little interrelationships shown in the research of youth understanding of money and saving and the interaction of this with their gambling behavior. A Wilska (2003) study did, however, suggest a relationship between parental education of money and budgeting and a reduction in gambling interest and participation, rather than increased adoption. The research clearly suggested that young consumers are vulnerable in terms of an inability to “switch off,” compulsive consumption, escalation of cyber relationships, and consumer debt. These behaviors are identified as major social problems posed by Internet and mobile digital technology (Wilska, 2003) and interactive online services such as gambling. A key area not yet explored is the influence of delayed financial loss or gratification through online credit and this stimulating further the young subject’s inability to switch off.

With both benefits and risks influencing youth, it is essential that a comprehensive understanding of online gambling access and consumption of interactive services be conducted to develop public policy for the impact of faster and more accessible services. This research addresses the critical challenge of youth gambling by offering a greater understanding of what youth think gambling is and how they define it. It also suggests that their naive understanding may contribute to consumption and risk-taking. Irrespective of logic and anecdotal evidence suggesting the presence of both positive and negative outcomes in this environment, limited empirical research is available that examines the nexus between faster online access, online gambling services consumption, and youth consumer well-being.

Online gambling and experiential aspects

Gambling is considered an enjoyable form of entertainment, offered in both formal and informal settings attracting varying age groups (Tarras, Singh, &

Moufakkir, 2000). Interestingly, gamblers can be defined under six categories including life liners, thrill seekers, escape artists, social adventurers, accompanists, and novelty acts (Tarras et al., 2000, p. 35). These categories highlight the determining characteristics and in order suggest the most to least loyal patrons of gambling practices. As previously discussed, the primary motivations of gamblers include and are not limited to entertainment, fun, social interaction, boredom, and monetary gain; excitement rather than monetary gain is suggested as the leading motivators to gamble (Deakin, Aitken, Robbins, & Sahakian, 2004). This supports the notion of arousal theory as a key gambling motivator. This would support the view that young adolescents especially athletes and extreme sports fanatics (Weinstock, Whelan, Meyers, & Watson, 2007) are more likely to take risks and be involved in games of skill and chance.

Intelligence levels are suggested as a factor for consideration with findings relating higher IQs with higher risk as this group tended to play strategically, i.e., betting more on larger odds (Weinstock et al., 2007). Through their gambling activities (online competitive games such as MMorg, online sports betting, online lotteries, cards such as solitaire and poker, online bingo, or other forms of gambling) adolescents escape into another world of fun without thought for the consequences of their behavior. Some segments of youth view gambling and gaming as a coping mechanism and a way of overcoming social isolation and idleness (Olason, Sigurdardottir, & Smari, 2006). The most common perceived benefits of gambling are suggested to be social enhancement, financial gain, and positive changes in affect/mood. These perceived benefits are proposed as a significant predictor of gambling problems and are significant internal motivators.

Much research and clinical work (Derevensky & Gupta, 1996; Gupta & Derevensky, 1998a, 1998b, 1999) suggests that the external motivator of money and financial gain is not the predominant reason why children and adolescents gamble. For adolescents gambling is about playing (Olason et al., 2006). Perceived availability, perceived risk, and perceived benefits are significant predictors of regular gambling. Research suggests participants generally rated gambling as more available than alcohol or marijuana and less risky than alcohol or cigarettes (Wickwire et al., 2007). The influx of high-speed broadband access, resulting in unlimited accessibility of synchronous interactive services (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, & Smith, 2007) allows consumers to immerse themselves in an enriched consumption environment. The experiential nature of consumption in the online gambling environment satisfying the sensation and fun seeking of the participant is identified as a motivation for online gambling use and ongoing loyalty (Okazaki, 2008; Wilson, 2006). This area of research is also yet to be explored.

Experiential consumption

Experiential consumption is above all a personal occurrence, often with important emotional significance, founded on the interaction with the products consumed (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Experience is a central element of the consumer life (Vézina, 1999). Products, like gambling, which are experiential in nature, are difficult to describe, as there is an inability to undertake a prepurchase evaluation of the quality of a product (service) (Varlander, 2007). The high degree of emotional involvement associated with an experiential product is often more important than the functional objective of the consumption process (Bigne, Mattila, & Andreu, 2008; Caru & Cova, 2008; Novak, Hoffman, & Duhancek, 2003; Varlander, 2007). The emotional intangible nature and the difficulty of preassessment of the service exchange all contribute to the complexities of the gambling experience.

Addis and Holbrook (2001, p. 50) emphasize “consumers are feelers as well as thinkers and doers” leading to the necessity of providers of interactive services to capture the market by creating an experience which is compelling for the consumer. By catering to the hedonistic needs of consumers, i.e., the “fun, pleasure and excitement,” firms can create higher levels of customer satisfaction, positive word of mouth, and a source of differentiation. This practice also supports the theory of arousal as a key motivation for online behavior. In the online environment focusing on creating and delivering, the experiential service elements can contribute to the experience (Addis & Holbrook, 2001; Bigne et al., 2008; Kim, 2004; Novak, Hoffman, & Yung, 1999, 2000). Okazaki (2008, p. 621) suggests adoption of online gaming services was characterized by how the consumers enjoyed the interaction and the degree of novelty associated with the online game. This survey obtained 164 usable responses from Japanese college students with an empirical data fit indicating a high level of reliability as well as convergent and discriminant validity for the model tested.

In reference to the youth market, the online experience allowed immersion, a necessity, considering children have limited attention spans and are easily distracted (Bennett, 2006). The theories underpinning experiential consumption are key to gambling research, as the nature of gambling is embedded in the pleasure-seeking risk-taking behavior evident in hedonic experiential consumption.

Youth online interactive services consumption motivation

Interactive services enhance efficiency and entertainment as well as increase spontaneity (Anckar & D’Incau, 2002). A national consumer survey was conducted to investigate the Finnish consumers’ willingness to use a number of initial mobile

services and to explore whether consumers recognize the value proposition of these applications. The results acknowledged that Internet technology and interactive (m) services adoption and usage have become integrated into young people's personal identity, through connectivity within reference groups (Wilska, 2003; MTV Research, 2007). Increasingly interaction with broadband/Internet interactive services is regarded as a necessity (MTV Research, 2007). Youth internalize technology such as the Internet into their lifestyles (Baron, Patterson, & Harris, 2006). This ready acceptance of technology may provide an indication of why some youth come to feel empowered by technology, specifically interactive services (Funston & MacNeill, 1999).

This empowerment may result from freer communication without the constraints of physical proximity and geographic location, the ability to perform tasks more efficiently, of both a work-related and social nature, or enabling private communications that exclude adults (Baron, Patterson, & Harris, 2006; Lacohee, Wakeford, & Pearson, 2003). Moreover, freedom to undertake endeavors without supervision is valued by many young people, and it has been argued that Internet and mobile phone technology are a rite of passage for adolescents (Bargh & McKenna, 2004; Castells, 2007; Fortunati, 2002; Hinduja & Patchin, 2008; Lenhart et al., 2007; Valkenburg & Peter, 2007) and creates this sense of freedom. The spontaneity and sense of freedom and empowerment reportedly motivating youth consumption of online interactive services has not, however, been accompanied by parallel investigation of impact of usage on their overall well-being and deserves specific investigation.

The prevalence of problem gambling and pathological (ongoing problem) gambling in adolescence and young adulthood has been found to be to four fold higher than in adulthood. Given that these high rates might predict future increases across all age groups, it is suggested that it is important to explore the motivations of gambling among youths. Impulsivity and pleasure seeking are proposed to underlie the phenomenology of pathological gambling, with arousal and sensation-seeking theories driving consumption and the related aspects of adolescent behavior. These traits are proposed to increase vulnerability to addictive behaviors such as problem and ongoing pathological gambling and these will be considered in this project (Chambers & Marc, 2003).

Method

This project adopts a qualitative approach using online text collections from a sample of 175 respondents aged 10–30 years. The textual scripts relate specifically to definitions and general perceptions of gambling, games of skill and games of

chance, most prominent interactions, and the gambling/gaming online interactions. The scripts were collected using online survey technology and collated and analyzed using coding and relational mapping software to highlight recurring themes. Questions included:

- What is definition of gambling?
- What is a game of skill? What is a game of chance?
- Do you gamble online? How do you gamble online?
- What do you play? How do you find a site online?
- What prize do you play for, e.g., points, money graphics?
- Whom do you play with? Why do you play with them?
- How do you pay?

All questions offered large text boxes and encouraged participants to answer freely. Online participants were recruited using several techniques including advertising, viral snowball technique (participants were invited to share the URL with friends and colleagues via e-mail, Facebook, and MSN messenger and encourage them to participate), offline recruitment in popular entertainment precincts and education venues and online recruitment via student university web links. A sample of 175 usable surveys was collected enabling rigorous analysis. As the sampling method was nonrandom, generalizability inferences of findings to the overall population are restricted, making the findings indicative to the population tested. However, these indicative findings contribute to the development of our understanding of the perception of gambling and its eventual influence and role in youth well-being.

A set of transcripts was created verbatim from each of the respondents and coded and organized using sequential incident analysis. A content analysis (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967) resulted in tabulated findings. This process is consistent with the method outlined by Hubbert, Sehorn, and Brown (1995). These findings identified the emergent themes and behaviors of how the youth cohort perceives and defines gambling. Further inductive analysis was undertaken based on understanding of the extant literature, and narratives were drawn from the scripts. This technique is consistent with Arnould and Price (1993).

Coupled with the youth and young adult textual collection, four CEO interviews of industry firms were conducted to gain a thorough understanding and appreciation of the issues and perspectives faced by these firms that deliver online

services accessed by youth and young adult groups. Sampling proceeded until theoretical saturation was achieved which resulted in the four interviews. These interviews were conducted to overlay the industry perspective of the behavior of this cohort and the cohort itself to offer a comprehensive landscape of youth gambling.

The next stage moved to a computer-assisted text analysis of the text responses undertaken using Leximancer version 3 (Smith, 2000, 2008) and relying on a corpus-based approach (Stubbs, 1996). The text responses of both sets of textual capture on the youth group and the CEOs were analyzed to provide a naturalistic set of responses for analysis. One advantage of the Leximancer system is it makes the investigator aware of the global context and significance of concepts and helps avoid fixation on particular anecdotal evidence, which may be atypical or erroneous (Smith & Humphreys, 2006). In the Leximancer analysis, concepts that occur in very similar semantic contexts tend to form clusters, and these clusters are grouped together by the Leximancer program to form themes that are mapped as circles.

Identification of the dominant themes was then undertaken by examining the map; Leximancer stochastically calculates the concepts in the corpus (as recommended by McKenna & Rooney, 2005). The size, centrality, and relationship to other themes and linkages between concepts within themes aid interpretation. Investigators used the full map to cross-reference and support the inductive findings and guide interpretation.

Findings

The highlights of the textual collection suggest that the majority of participants define gambling as a game. This cohort appears to have a limited view of the potential risks and hazards associated with gambling and view it as a “sport” and as fun. The online gambling context is viewed by the majority to be a typical interactive graphic display online that offers experiential and exciting gaming. Similar to other studies, amotivation and intrinsic motivation were prominent responses for this group. The retorts included “something to do,” “curiosity,” and to gamble for fun. The extrinsic motivation of winning money was less frequent with stimulation and socialization being more common reasons nominated by the young adult group.

For some the initial motivation was for entertainment and social reasons, but after winning the external motivation of the “prize” developed. This suggests that arousal theory, which is related to the excitement of the game, is then overcome by cognitive theories, which measure the gains. In this group, arousal theory and

cognitive theory tend to cycle through each other such as sensation seeking to reward, back to increase sensation seeking, and so on. The interesting element of this was the lack of cognitive ability to turn off the cycle. The following section highlights some specific textual responses and elaborates on these theoretical findings with practical narrative.

What is gambling: Do these children really have an understanding of what gambling is?

Most youth participants do not know what the word “gambling” means – they suppose they are playing a game or sport. Many suggested their parents did not fully understand the meaning of gambling or what they were doing when gambling and the possible positive and negative outcomes. Many of this cohort suggested they were playing for rewards – e.g., extra graphics, faster speed, money, free subscriptions, more accessories, and to progress to a higher skill level, with the majority playing for fun. The group showed a lack of understanding of the consequences of gambling and did not fully appreciate the term “quit while you are ahead.” Negative reinforcement and outcome, e.g., loss, did make the user stop or bet less whereas advertising increased interest and exposure to available gambling and promoted the “fun” of winning.

Gambling definitions

Table 1 depicts the representation of all definitions of “what is gambling” from each participant. Note by the table frequencies and responses that there are many definitions represented. Some are negative toward gambling; others are related to entertainment, gaming, and winning. There is no question that the variety offered of these definitions indicates a lack of understanding of gambling and a limited consensus on the nature of gambling. When clustered and examined using relational mapping, three very distinct groups emerge. These include those who define gambling as a game, as fun, and as a family activity; those who defined gambling as gaming, related closely to games of skill; and a very small group who defined gambling as immoral, illegal, stupid, and risky. These groups can be visualized in the relational Map One (Figure 1).

Map One offers a group of global nodes. The smaller nodes of chance and “risk taking” in the Leximancer analysis relate to the minority group that defined and perceived gambling as an inappropriate practice. The Leximancer 3.0 analysis suggests the large global emergent themes of money, chance, game, and taking, which is representative of risk taking. It is inferred that the lack of strong reasoning and understanding of the underpinnings of gambling and the absence

TABLE 1

Definition of Gambling as Offered by Respondents

WHAT IS GAMBLING?	FREQUENCY
Playing games where you can win money	12
A costly addiction for some people	2
A game or bet where you have something to lose	2
A waste of money	4
A way to lose money	4
Addiction of playing online	6
An addiction where hope and chance contribute to many cases of poverty	2
Bad habit, negative attitude	2
Betting and playing/betting against the pot and winning	8
Betting cash and money or a tangible object	8
Betting money/assets on pokies/races/ cards, etc.	2
Betting on games with money/against the pot	6
Can use it for fun (not using money) game	2
Entertainment and addictive	2
Fun – can be done professionally	2
Is a game to increase your money but all most all people lose money	2
Game playing and winning with money	8
Greed, addiction, money obsession, and wastage, e.g., casino	2
Illegal group gathering for negative competitor	2
Taking chances out of your luck unless you are very calculative	2
Making money by taking chances, fun, exciting	2
My future career	2
No response, not sure	8
Not a good habit	2
Playing pokies and betting on horses	2
Putting as asset, i.e., money at risk for the chance to win	2
Putting money down on a possible outcome occurring in the gain for more money	4
Putting your money on the table, not good in terms of culture or society. A business opportunity for loan sharks	2

(Continued)

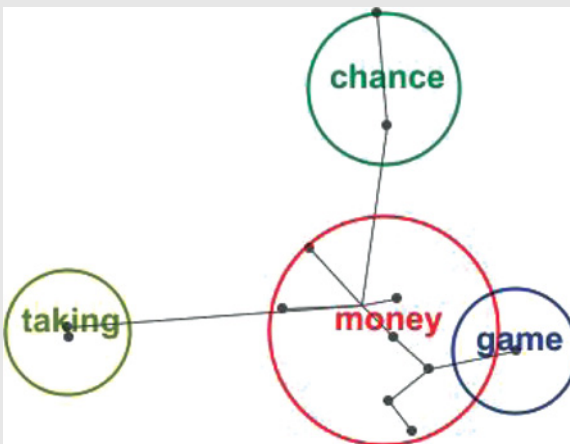
TABLE 1

Continued

WHAT IS GAMBLING?	FREQUENCY
Risking something for a chance to gain something greater	2
Something about wins and loses money. Changes someone's social and life behaviors	2
Spending money on events, affordable or not, that takes chance	4
Stupid games for money	2
Taking chances, trying your luck, stupidity	2
Tool that people use for getting money or leisure activity	2
Use a machine to win money, to play games, to accumulate prizes	6
Using resources or money at your own risk to possibly win resources	2
Waste of time and money, on nonprofit activities	6
When you risk your money to win more money by betting on an event	2
Winning	2

of the true understanding of risk and sacrifice inhibit the controlled practice of gambling in this cohort. Gambling appears to be more a friend than a foe, more sport than sin, and more winning than losing. Irrespective of laws prohibiting

FIGURE 1

Map One: What is Gambling?

gambling in the younger group, online gambling was suggested to be easily accessed, freely available, and easily navigated.

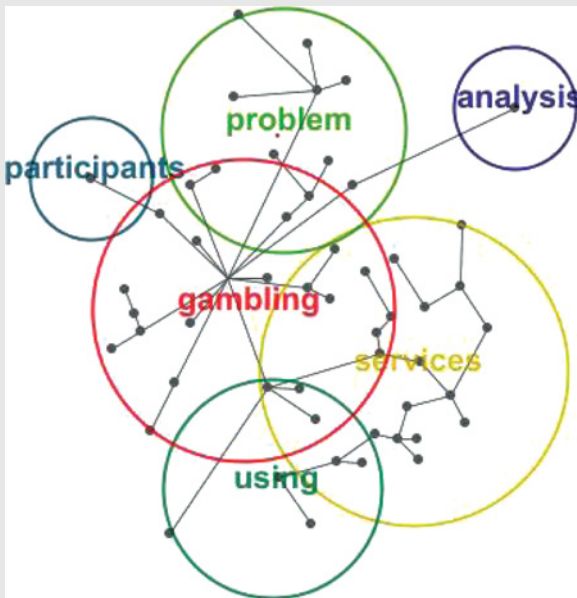
The majority of participants suggested that gambling was a game of skill, where they could develop better skills the more they participated. Interestingly, the only group to suggest that gambling was a game of chance was the small minority that found gambling to be stupid, risk taking, sinful, and addictive. Moreover, the majority of participants suggested there was family acceptance of gambling and this played a strong role in adoption and participation. They suggested their parents and siblings all played and that often their parents funded the gambling and gaming practice.

Gambling behavior and online interactions

The second set of textual analysis and mapping offered is related to gambling behavior and perceptions of gambling practice online and can be found in Map Two (Figure 2). This map relates to playing, game type, payment, and online interactions. Please double-check map two image, It does not include “gambler”

FIGURE 2

Map Two: Gambling Interactions and Online Services



or “gaming” as described in the article text. The key concepts noted from the relational maps included “*gambling*” interlinked with “*gamblers*” and “*gaming*,” of note is the subtheme of risk emerging in this map. These concepts are depicted by the relational pathways linking to participants, using, and services. “*Services*,” which is related to the different types and games offered online, development that relates to new and exciting technologies, experiential consumption, and behavior. This is interlinked with *using* and *gambling* which offer comment on the practice of using the online sites. Sport, social, skill, and industry offer the central themes in the *gambling* node and these are strongly linked with *services*, *problem*, and *participants*. These pathways are shown by the lines and nodes as seen in Figure 2. The perception of “games of skill and games of chance” are both central to gambling and the focus on **play** are clearly identified in the maps. Interestingly, the global node of *problem* clearly identifies the subthemes of pathological, age, gamblers, parents, and gambling and clearly identifies betting. It is evident this node relates to particular adolescents, parents, social groups, and employment types suggesting some of these are at a greater risk of developing problems.

Industry perspective

The article now offers the industry perspective on the practice of youth gambling, the ease of access, and general observation of industry participants with regard to youth gambling. The following comments are a collation of the key terms and comments emerging from the industry experts. The key themes include the importance and stringency of legislation preventing each form of gambling type interacting illegally with youth, payment types, and general comments. It is interesting that the overall industry perspective is one of improved channel delivery for gambling in general and a reasonableness of the legislation protecting the youth cohort. The discussion offers the themes of the question and the related responses for the participants.

Current online technologies and access to games and activities

The industry representatives were familiar with the legislation for online gambling. They possessed knowledge related to U.S. legislation that prevents betting outside America, and Australian legislation that prevents supply of online casino services to Australian residents.

Interviewee 1 (sports betting specialist): *Many online bookmakers in Australia, availability to bet over Internet, sports betting, many bet on races and more and more have online casinos...even though Australia has strict regulations on online casinos... USA has very strict regulations of online gambling, only two states have*

legalized gambling and you cannot bet outside of these states; illegal for Americans to bet on online overseas betting shops.

All interviewees agreed that online gambling was relatively easy for the participants with technology and software (if required) freely available. Mobile gambling was evident and supported the concept of online practice.

Interviewee 2 (cards): *Yes, through the use of iPhones and blackberries.*

Interviewee 1 (sports betting): *One particular punter has never used online betting, preferring to place horse bets using only his phone/mobile.*

It was evident with all representatives that faster online broadband has improved the betting time and experience for both the supplier and the customer.

Interviewee 1 (sports betting): *Yes easier and quicker to participate. It was very painful with slow broadband, easier to place a bet in approx 90 secs rather than 5–6 minutes.*

Interviewee 3 (lotteries specialist): *Yes participants tend to go online 3 to 4 times more than when dial up was the preferred network. Databases and technology increasing, this is increasing betting opportunities.*

Interviewee 4 (sports betting): *Yes, increased frequencies of bets places but not necessarily size of bets.*

There was consensus with industry participants that faster speed access has influenced online behavior with faster response time allowing for more frequent bet/response activity, increased access and ease, and increased frequency of betting. This frequency has not appeared to influence the size of betting.

Interviewee 1 (sports betting): *Previously a bet response would take 5–7 minutes . . . now it is immediate.*

The betting system was similar to banking, with consumers requiring and providing 100 points of identification to collect any winnings. The industry participants suggested this legislation was protective and effective in managing underage gaming related to the youth cohort. All representatives suggested there could be possibly for fraud for minors; however, they acted in their best ability within the legislations. Credit card fraud tended to occur within a family and in their experience was rare and sorted out privately.

Interviewee 1: *Through 100 points of ID, the respondent must tick certain parts of agreement, similar to an affidavit ID, it makes fraud difficult.*

Interestingly, in the youth textual transcripts the groups suggested that parents and friends allowed shared access to credit payment and money circumventing this legislation. Overall, online gambling was seen to be very easy, quick and easily accessed, and efficient.

Sport betting: How easy is online gambling?

Interviewee 1: *It is very easy to sign up for a betting account, piece of cake.*

Interviewee 2 (card specialist): *Through Internet, they initially open an account and must supply 100 point of ID, they are able to make a bet without the ID but will not be paid out any winnings until the ID is supplied. This rule is strictly enforced.*

Use of advertising, marketing, and media communications

Most industry representatives felt advertising was not their primary point of communication, with word of mouth and viral e-mail references the most popular consumer recruitment program. The legislation now allows for all services except online casinos to advertise across state boundaries.

Interviewee 3 (lottery specialist): *Advertising – TV ads, advertising on websites, can now advertise outside state.*

Each representative suggested he or she manages customers just like any other business. They track their behavior segment and design products to meet their needs.

Interviewee 2 (cards): *Each customer has an account / client ID created when they supply their ID (personal details). All names are held in a database. This contains all financial details, age demographics, betting history only accessible by company employees. They [customers] get on the database by applying via website/and or mail.*

There appeared to be a consensus that payment process was best upfront. Suppliers provided several different methods of payment and were very conscious about getting payment prior to the user playing. Most suppliers only allowed one credit failure with the transaction written off and the consumers locked out of future games and future wagering.

Interviewee 2 (cards): *Customers can deposit money by credit card, firstly they must photocopy front and back of credit card statement and send it to us with secret number cvv . . . Paypal facilities are available. Customers may apply for credit, whether we grant the credit is up to employees.*

Interviewee 1 (sports betting): *One interstate online betting agency I know will only accept payment via cheque or direct debit.*

Finally, the industry representatives suggested the “internal” motivations toward gambling were to make money, including specific funding motivators such as winning funds to create a business, build a house, and generate income. They suggested the preferences toward gambling activities (e.g., through use of desktop or mobile technology or pokies, etc) was online gambling on sport, poker machines, and casinos. Some suggested the card market in Australia was growing but was not as popular (in their opinion) as sports betting. The industry representatives suggested the majority of customers (upward of 70%) have control of their gambling online, with the others (30%) considered to be “betting beyond their means.”

Consensus among industry members was a strong conviction that both industry and government use gambling as a revenue raiser, and, as such, legislators and suppliers made it too accessible. Industry persons felt that all forms of gambling are too accessible and easy for all age groups to access. They all suggested that online gambling has not increased the danger for gamblers; the problem gamblers are still the problem gamblers and would gamble whether online or onsite. Online gambling was seen as the activity for people with more technological information and wealth (e.g., computer and Internet access). Possibly the assumption was that they may have better control and intelligence.

Industry Leximancer analysis

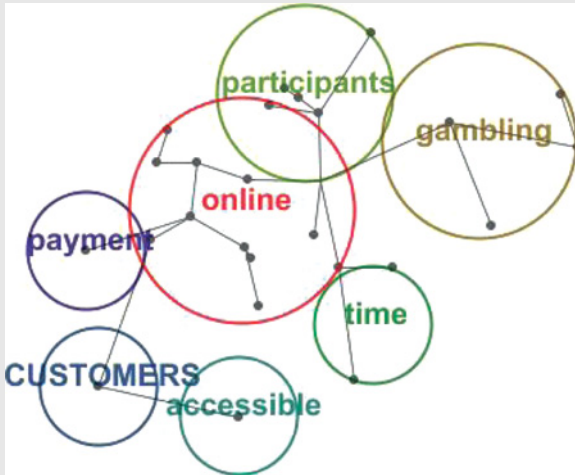
Further with the narrative scripts, the Leximancer maps for the industry interviews offered seven very clear concepts including *participants*, *payment*, *online*, and *gambling* all interlinked with *online* the strongest concept. Further nodes, shown in map three, include *customers*, *accessible*, and *time* with these not interlinked with the main concept online (Figure 3).

Online theme: Participants, gambling and payment

The *online* theme is the largest and most central in the map reflecting the guiding theme of the in-depth interviews. This suggests that going online was a positive and frequent response and that gambling activities online were productive and lucrative for the experts. This is the richest theme in the global map with the most elaborated set of concepts. The concepts linked to this theme are those of *participants*, *payment*, and *gambling*. *Payment* offered an interesting advance as the industry found managing the younger and problem gamblers could be controlled by the stringent payment system.

FIGURE 3

Map Three: Industry Analysis



Participants theme

The *online* theme is comprised of identifying participants, both industry and players. It is evident that the participants and the act of interacting with others (people) are seen as interesting by the users and as an important part of the gambling offering. This supports the notion that going online is a social means for youth to interact with their friends with this notion supported in the 10–18-year-old and 19–30-year-old maps. These relationship pathways position online gambling as a social act, supported by friends.

Time theme

Being online is also closely associated with the activities of *gambling*, *accessible*, and *time*. Industry experts suggested that faster speed broadband has reduced the time required for transaction and increased the frequency of betting and made online gambling more accessible. Time spent online and time available to spend online is of interest in the *online* theme.

Discussion

There are four emergent concepts of importance stated by industry. First, online gambling is popular. Second, it has a strong loyal participant group. Third, faster

online broadband has made gambling more accessible, and, finally, faster access has made faster payment channels. These, coupled with the naive perception of online gambling offered by the youth sample, positions online gambling as a high-risk activity in the youth cohort. Age legislation prevents many under-18 youth from freely interacting with online gambling sites; however, there is limited research to show whether credit card fraud or support from an over-18 “friend” or relative impedes the success of this legislation. Research into the payment process and the shared gambling activities that may occur in families would provide some further input into gambling consumption and preventative practices.

Moreover, there are motivation and risk behaviors noted from this younger group such as interactions with games of skill online that expose them to early stage pleasure and gratification that can predispose addiction and escalation of commitment to more complex games. This exposure positions youth users as a vulnerable “pleasure-seeking” cohort for the future. This pleasure seeking motivation is supported by the notion of arousal theory with youth using gambling for fun, pleasure, and stimulation. It is acknowledged as a result of the sample group researched in this project that not all gambling youth will become addicted and have negative financial outcomes and negative experiences; however, the profile of problem online gamblers is difficult to categorically ascertain at this stage. Therefore, general harm minimization strategies have been suggested as the most likely strategy to reduce the negative effects of gambling on youth for all users. Problem gambling outcomes can lead to pathological and ongoing crisis, so minimization strategies at the early adoption phase will assist in managing these outcomes in the future.

Recommendations for youth gambling

Harm minimization policies and practices are proposed to assist in the management of problem gambling and deter excessive and ill-informed online gambling practices from developing into pathological states. Education and harm minimization deserve consideration and promotion in the examination and prevention of youth and young adult interaction with online gambling services. Harm minimization practices related to all aspects of gambling from the providers to the government should be considered and channeled through online gambling services. Youth precincts, schools, colleges, and school curricular should also promote qualified awareness of gambling and its risks.

Providers should take a more supportive and proactive role in identifying problem gamblers with time limits, exclusions, and credit limits all standard practice when a problem is suspected. All gambling online venues, sites, and portals

should carry links to problem gambling information, with clear links to problem gambling, chat-rooms, and online counseling. Advertising standards should be introduced that responsibly promote gambling activity and provide clear warnings of the dangers of gambling. Public education campaigns, national education campaigns and educational material related to gambling practice should be developed and communicated through sites. Practices such as these have been raised and discussed by policy groups; however, few of these strategies are in operation (Gambling Progress Report, 2004–2008). Further research is needed to reduce the negative effects of gambling on youth, with this research communicated through networks targeted at youth consumers.

Conclusion

It is strongly evidenced in this group that the potential hazards and dangers of online gambling are overlooked, ignored, and or naively underestimated by youth who gamble. The majority of this youth cohort clearly defines gambling as a game, as fun, and as social. Early game playing that offers reward and satisfaction are viewed as contributing to the gambling culture and the gratification cycle witnessed with excessive gamblers. Potential addiction, financial loss and negative social impacts are overlooked, unknown, or ignored in this group. This article has offered an early evaluation of online gambling in youth and has positioned this topic as an area warranting further exploration and research.

About the Authors

Margee Hume, B.Bus., Dip.Ex., M.B.A., Ph.D., is an academic in the University of Southern Queensland Management and Marketing Department. Her academic interests include interactive technology, services operations and sustainable marketing. She has over 50 publications. Her teaching interests include non profit and social marketing, interactive technologies, service operations and internal marketing.

Gillian Sullivan Mort, B.Sc., Dip. Psych., B.A., Dip. Ed., M.B.A., Ph.D., is a professor of Marketing at Latrobe University. She has achieved an excellent research output. She commenced the international nonprofit and social marketing group and has authored over 100 publications. Her research interests include international marketing, social entrepreneurship, social marketing and technology marketing and innovation.

References

- Abbott, D. A., Cramer, S. L., & Sherrets, S. D. (1995). Pathological gambling and the family: Practice implications. *Families in Society*, 76, 213.
- Addis, M., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). On the conceptual link between mass customisation and experiential consumption: An explosion of subjectivity. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 1(1), 50–66.
- Anckar, B., & D'Incau, D. (2002). Value creation in mobile commerce: Findings from a consumer survey. *Journal of Information Technology Theory and Application*, 4(1), 43–64.
- Arnould, E. J., & Price, L. L. (1993). River magic: Extraordinary experience and the extended service encounter. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), 24–55.
- Bargh, J. A., & McKenna, K. Y. A. (2004). The Internet and social life. *Annual Review Psychology*, 55, 573–590.
- Baron, S., Patterson, A., & Harris, K. (2006). Beyond technology acceptance: Understanding consumer practice. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 17, 111–135.
- Bennett, C. (2006). Keeping up with the kids. *Young Consumers*, 2, 28–32.
- Bigne, E., Mattila, A., & Andreu, L. (2008). The impact of experiential consumption cognitions on behavioural intentions. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 22, 303–315.
- Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1). Retrieved from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html>
- Budd, R. W., Thorp, R. K., & Donohew, L. (1967). *Content analysis of communications*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Caru, A., & Cova, B. (2008). Small versus big stories in framing consumption experiences. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 11, 166–176.
- Castells, M. (2007). Communication, power and counter-power in the network society. *International Journal of Communication*, 1, 238–266.
- Chambers, R. A., & Marc, N. P. (2003). Neurodevelopment, impulsivity, and adolescent gambling. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 19(1), 53–84.
- Deakin, J., Aitken, M., Robbins, T., & Sahakian, B. J. (2004). Risk taking during decision-making in normal volunteers changes with age. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*, 10, 590–598.
- Delfabbro, P., & Thrupp, L. (2003). The social determinants of youth gambling in South Australian adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 26, 313–330. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?Ob=ArticleURL&uId=B6WHO-48GDXVJ-1&_user=79777&_rdoc=1&_fmt_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000006418&_versio
- Derevensky, J. L., & Gupta, R. (1996, September). *Risk-taking and gambling behaviour among adolescents: An empirical examination*. Paper presented at the Tenth National Conference on Problem Gambling, Chicago, IL.

- Derevensky, J. L., Gupta, R., & Winters, K. (2003). Prevalence rates of youth gambling problems: Are the current rates inflated? *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 19, 405–425.
- Downs, C., & Woolrych, R. (2009, October). *Gambling and Debt Pathfinder study*. Manchester Metropolitan University RIHSC: Research Institute for Health and Social Change.
- Finn, M. (2005). Gaming goes mobile: Issues and implications. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society*, 3(1), 31–42.
- Fortunati, L. (2002). The mobile phone: Towards new categories and social relations. *Information, Communication and Society*, 5, 513–529.
- Funston, A., & MacNeill, K. (1999). *Mobile matters: Young people and mobile phones*. Melbourne, Australia: Communications Law Centre.
- Gambling Progress Report. (2004–2008). *Council of Australian governments on implementation of the national framework on problem gambling (NFPG)*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Government Press.
- Gambling Research Australia. (2005). *Problem gambling and harm: Towards a national definition*. SA Centre for Economic Studies with the Department of Psychology, University of Adelaide. ABN:0 975119 4 1.
- Gibson, B. (2009). Global mobile gambling market to rise from under \$2bn from bets placed in 2006 to over \$23bn by 2011. Press release. Retrieved from <http://juniperresearch.com/shop/viewpressrelease.php?pr=4>
- Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. L. (1998a). Adolescent gambling behaviour: A prevalence study and examination of the correlates associated with excessive gambling. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 14, 227–244.
- Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. L. (1998b). An empirical examination of Jacob's general theory of addictions: Do adolescent gamblers fit the theory? *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 14, 17–49.
- Gupta, R., & Derevensky, J. L. (1999, August). *Treatment programs for adolescent problem gamblers: Some important considerations*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Boston, MA.
- Hinduja, S., & Patchin, J. W. (2008). Cyberbullying: An exploratory analysis of factors related to offending and victimization. *Deviant Behaviour*, 29, 129–156.
- Holbrook, M., & Hirschman, E. (1982). Hedonic consumption: Emerging concepts, methods and proposition. *Journal of Marketing*, 46(3), 92–101.
- Hubbert, A. R., Sehorn, A., & Brown, S. W. (1995). Service expectations: The consumer versus the provider. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 6(1), 6–21.
- Kim, J. (2004). Why people continue to play online games: In search of critical design factors to increase customer loyalty to online contents. *CyberPsychology & Behaviour*, 7(1), 11–24.
- Lacohée, H., Wakeford, N., & Pearson, I. (2003). A social history of the mobile telephone with a view of its future. *BT Technology Journal*, 21, 203–211.

- Lenhart, A., Madden, M., Macgill, A., & Smith, A. (2007). *Teens and social media, Pew internet and American life project*. Retrieved http://www.pewInternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Teens_Social_Media_Final.pdf
- McKenna, B., & Rooney, D. (2005, November). *Wisdom management: Tensions between theory and practice in practice*. Paper presented at Knowledge Management in the Asia Pacific, Wellington, NZ.
- Moore, S. M., & Ohtsuka, K. (1997). Gambling activities of young Australians: Developing a model of behaviour. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 13, 207–236.
- MTV Research, and Strategic Insights. (2007). *Happiness*. Retrieved from http://www.mtv.com/thinkmtv/research/pdf/MTV_Happiness_FINAL.pdf
- Novak, T. P., Hoffman, D. L., & Duhachek, A. (2003). The influence of goal-directed and experiential activities on online flow experiences. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(1/2), 3–16.
- Novak, T. P., Hoffman, D. L., & Yung, Y. (1999). *Measuring the flow construct in online environments*. Retrieved from <http://sloan.ucr.edu/blog/uploads/papers/Measuring%20the%20Flow%20Construct%20in%20Online%20Environments%20-%20A%20Structural%20Modeling%20Approach%20%5BHoffman,%20Novak,%20Yiu-Fai%20Yung%20-%20Apr%201999%5D.pdf>
- Novak, T. P., Hoffman, D. L., & Yung, Y. F. (2000). Measuring the customer experience in online environments: A structural modeling approach. *Marketing Science*, 19(1), 20–42.
- Okazaki, S. (2008). Exploring experiential value in online mobile gaming adoption. *CyberPsychology & Behaviour*, 11, 619–622.
- Olason, D. T., Sigurdardottir, K. J., & Smari, J. (2006). Prevalence estimates of gambling participation and problem gambling among 16–18-year-old students in Iceland: A comparison of the SOGS-RA and DSM-IV-MR-J. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 22(1), 23–39.
- Petry, N. M., & Weinstock, J. (2007). Internet gambling is common in college students and associated with poor mental health. *American Journal on Addictions*, 16, 325–330.
- Smith, A. E. (2000). Machine mappings of document collections: The Leximancer system. *Proceedings of the Fifth Australasian Document Computing Symposium*. Sunshine Coast, Australia: DSTC. Retrieved from <http://www.Leximancer.com/technology.html>
- Smith, A. E. (2008). *Leximancer: The why, not just the what manual version 3*. Sunshine Coast, Australia: DSTC. Retrieved from <http://www.Leximancer.com.au>
- Smith, A. E., & Humphreys, M. (2006). Evaluation of unsupervised semantic mapping of natural language with Leximancer concept mapping. *Behaviour Research Methods*, 38, 262–279.
- Stubbs, M. (1996). *Text and corpus analysis: Computer-assisted studies of language and culture*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Tarras, J., Singh, A. J., & Moufakkir, O. (2000). The profile and motivations of elderly women gamblers. *Gambling Research & Review Journal*, 5(1), 33–46.
- Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007). Online communication and adolescent well-being: Testing the stimulation versus the displacement hypothesis. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(4). Retrieved from <http://jcmc.indian.edu/vol12/issue4/valkenburg.html>

- Varlander, S. (2007). Online information quality in experiential consumption: An exploratory study. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 14, 328–338.
- Vézina, R. (1999). Pour comprendre et analyser l'expérience du consommateur. *Gestion*, 24(2), 59–65.
- Wajcman, J., Bittman, M., Jones, P., Johnstone, L., & Brown, J. (2007). *The impact of the mobile phone on work/life balance*. Canberra, Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association.
- Weinstock, J., Whelan, J. P., Meyers, A. W., & Watson, J. M. (2007). Gambling behaviour of student-athletes and a student cohort: What are the odds? *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 23, 13–24.
- Wickwire Jr., E. M., Whelan, J. P., West, R., Meyers, A., McCausland, C., & Leullen, J. (2007). Perceived availability, risks, and benefits of gambling among college students. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 23, 395–408.
- Wilska, T. (2003). Mobile phone use as part of young people's consumption styles. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 26, 441–462.
- Wilson, B. (2006). Ethnography, the Internet, and youth culture: Strategies for examining social resistance and "online-offline" relationships. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29(1), 307–330.