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Front Cover: Downtown Las Vegas Roulette, Manis Collection
Our Mission

The Center for Gaming Research is a world-class hub for the scholarly analysis and public discussion of gambling and gaming issues. Through a variety of means, we provide information and engage with the public about gambling and gaming.

Our Collections

The largest assembly of English-language material in the world that documents and explains the impact of gaming, supplemented by a growing online collection of reports, papers, interviews, and exhibits on Nevada and the world.

Our Programming

The Center’s fellowship program draws world-class scholars to UNLV to study gambling; its Colloquium series and podcast bring their voices and others’ to a global audience. The Center also hosts lectures from renowned gaming experts.

Our Engagement

Responding to requests from the industry, the media, and the general public, the Center delivers factual data about gaming and gambling to a variety of audience through several channels, including its web portal gaming.unlv.edu. By managing the UNLV Gaming Press, it disseminates gaming scholarship in book form.
The Center for Gaming Research continues to provide opportunities for the study of gambling, access to gambling data, and new content that broadens the horizons of gambling research. In 2014, the Center hosted Eadington Fellows, sponsored Colloquium talks, made accessible new and valuable information to gambling researchers, and helped to enrich the worldwide knowledge of gambling in many other ways.

There are many exciting highlights—the publication of a new book through the UNLV Gaming Press, the acquisition of rare and unique materials, the expansion of our online presence for Asian visitors—but for me the high point of the year was simply the fact that the Center was able to help so many people of wildly dissimilar backgrounds. Academic researchers, students, media members, regulators, government staffers, and industry professionals all have very different information needs, but members of each group found valuable help at the Center, particularly through its website, http://gaming.unlv.edu.

In 2015, the Center is poised to continue its proud history of providing a place to study gambling and helping those who want to know more about gambling, in all its diverse facets. I hope you find this look back at the Center’s 2014 high points as interesting as I do.
Collections

The Gaming Collection, housed in UNLV’s Special Collections, is the world’s premier research repository of information relating to gambling and commercial gaming. Since the gaming industry today has a global scope, the collection embraces not only Las Vegas and Nevada gaming, but gambling throughout the world.

The Collection documents the history and statistical basis of games and gambling; the economics and regulation of the gaming industry; the psychological, social, and political effects of gambling; and the history of specific hotel and casinos throughout the world. It includes casino corporate archives including the Harrah’s Entertainment, MGM Resorts, and Boyd Gaming Corporate Archives; gaming-related manuscript collections such as the Sands, New Frontier, and Binion’s Horseshoe collections; complete runs of the major (and most minor) trade journals and publications; government documents and financial reports from equity analysts; and fiction and non-fiction accounts of Las Vegas and gambling.

Photographs and motion pictures that document casinos and gambling, and oral histories conducted with gaming industry figures deepen the Collection’s value to researchers. Finally, the Tice Collection of rare imprints is a significant resource on 19th century gaming.

In 2014, the Collection added new serials, new monographs, and several rare and unique items, such as an early edition of Hoyle’s The Polite Gamester and early 20th century gambling catalogs.

UNLV Gaming Press

The Press’s mission is to make available the scholarly output of university-sponsored conferences, historic materials that the university holds, and new work that illuminates the legal, economic, social, and historical dimension of gambling and gaming in all of its forms.

In 2014, the Press published its third book: Ngai Pindell and Anthony Cabot’s Regulating Land-Based Casinos: Policies, Procedures, and Economics. A collection that takes an in-depth look at all aspects of casino gaming regulation, the book has been praised as a “must read” for all those interested in the gaming industry.

The material in Regulating Land-Based Casinos was the result of a conference organized by the Boyd School of Law. With nineteen authors, the book offers a wide-ranging look at a variety of issues in casino gaming regulation.

Previous books published by the press include Ngai Pindell and Anthony Cabot’s Regulating Interet Gaming: Challenges and Opportunities, a collection that features papers presented at a 2012 symposium on gaming law held at the Boyd School of Law, and David G. Schwartz’s Frontiers in Chance: Gaming Research Across the Disciplines, a collection of work originally published in the Center for Gaming Research’s Occasional Paper Series, which displays the breadth of current research at the Center and across the several fields that contribute to the study of gambling.
Eadington Fellowships

Established in 2007 and renamed for pioneering gaming research Bill Eadington in 2013, the Eadington Fellowship program brings scholars to Lied Library to spend up to one month conducting research at the UNLV Special Collections. While here, the fellows use the largest gambling library in the world, which spans the 17th to 21st centuries and includes manuscript collections, casino corporate archives, promotional and publicity files, and government publications.

Ultimately, each of the scholars produces a publication—a peer-reviewed article, dissertation, or a book—that incorporates the research conducted at UNLV. This fits with the Center’s mission of promoting scholarship on gambling and highlights the uses to which scholars can put our collections.

At the end of their residency, they deliver a public talk as part of the Gaming Research Colloquium series. The talk is recorded and released as a UNLV Gaming Podcast. Each fellow also contributes a paper to the Center’s Occasional Paper Series, making their work accessible to the general public.

Both faculty and graduate students are eligible for the program. Applicants have represented the fields of history, economics, English, history, sociology, and anthropology. Since the program’s inception, Eadington scholars have published articles, completed dissertations, and authored books that have pushed the boundaries of scholarship. From this perspective, the program has been an unqualified success.

In 2014, the Center hosted six fellows. They are:

**Richard Williams**

Writer and independent scholar

Residency: February 11-25, 2014

A cultural historian with a background in Classics and Art History, Richard has held teaching and research posts at universities including Newcastle and Glasgow, and has published on Greek drama and French revolutionary art. He has also co-curated exhibitions in both of these fields.

Currently Richard is working on genetic criticism of Erle Stanley Gardner’s A.A. Fair novels, arising from study of the manuscripts at the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, as a visiting research fellow in 2011-12, and has given presentations on this work at a number of recent international conferences.

Symposium Talk: February 25, “Erle Stanley Gardner in Las Vegas

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2014 Eadington fellow Richard Williams
Michelle Robinson
Assistant Professor of American Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Residency: March 6 - March 19, 2014

Michelle Robinson is an Assistant Professor of American Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill. Her essays have appeared in Studies in the Novel, Modern Drama, Children's Literature Association Quarterly and elsewhere. She is currently completing a book manuscript titled Places for Dead Bodies: Blackness, Labor and Detection in American Literature, which links the emergence and development of the detective fiction genre to anxieties about interracial sociability in the world of work, and beginning research on a project at the intersection of working-class studies and religious studies, which will use historical case studies to suggest new ways of understanding how communities respond to religious events.

Symposium Talk: March 18, 3 PM
“Billy Graham Comes to Las Vegas: Faith at Work on the Strip”

Robert W. Miller
Assistant Instructor and Ph.D Candidate in History at the University of Kansas

Residency: February 24 – March 21, 2014

Robert Miller is a doctoral candidate in Modern European History at the University of Kansas, under the direction of Dr. Chris Forth. His research interests include histories of travel, tourism, culture, and consumption. He is primarily a historian of Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but also conducts research in international history. Mr. Miller’s current project is his dissertation “Constructing a Spatial Imaginary: The Formation and Re-presentation of Monte Carlo as a Vacation-Leisure Paradise, 1854-1970.” The project centers on how casino concessionaires and civic planners established an imaginary of elite, cosmopolitan luxury surrounding the casino-resort of Monte Carlo, and how visitors to the city (and popular culture) perpetuated or changed such an imaginary.

Symposium talk: March 21, 2014, 3 PM
“Paradise of Spectacle: Imagining and Re-presenting Casino Resorts as Spaces of Luxury and Leisure in the Twentieth Century”

Lee Scrivner
U.S. State Department sponsored University Lecturer, Colombia

Residency: December 3-17, 2013 and March 16-29, 2014

Dr. Scrivner is a Lecturer in American literature and culture sponsored by the US Department of State, currently touring universities in Colombia. Formerly, (2010-2012) he was a Fulbright Lecturer in the Humanities at Bosphorus University in Istanbul, a sessional lecturer at the University of London (2007-2008); and an adjunct professor at UNLV (2001-2005). His first book, Becoming Insomniac: How Sleeplessness Alarmed Modernity, forthcoming from Palgrave Macmillan explores a century-and-a-half old notion that
modern, technologized life causes insomnia. The book investigates theories of sleeplessness, sensation, attention, and volition in medical, psychological, literary texts—mostly from the Victorian period, but also spanning through to today.

Symposium Talk: March 27th, 3 PM “Las Vegas, an Atemporal History”

**Matias Karekallas**

Ph.D. Student, Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki Project Researcher, The Finnish Foundation for Gaming Research Residency: March 19 - April 8, 2014

Karekallas is a sociology Ph.D. student in the Department of Social Research at the University of Helsinki, Finland. His dissertation approaches gambling from a cultural perspective and examines the (mental) images and places attached to gambling. In addition to gambling, his primary (research) interests include various phenomena related to popular music and sports. Karekallas is also a project researcher at the Finnish Foundation for Gaming Research and is currently working on a project that examines how people begin and learn to gamble.

Symposium talk: April 4, 3 PM

“The Ambivalent Images of Las Vegas in Popular Music”

**Stefan Al**

Associate Professor of Urban Design at the University of Pennsylvania

Residency: May 5-18

Stefan Al is a Dutch architect, urban designer, and Associate Professor of Urban Design at the University of Pennsylvania. In his career to date, Al has worked on renowned architectural projects such as the 2,000-feet high Canton Tower in Guangzhou, the preservation of world heritage in Latin America at the World Heritage Center of UNESCO, and an 11,000-acre new eco-friendly city in India.

Al’s research interests include urban form and evolution, urbanization in developing countries, and ecological urban development. His design practice is dedicated to sustainable architecture and urban design, with design work exhibited at the Shenzhen and Hong Kong Architecture Biennale.

His writing has been published in the Handbook of Architectural Theory, the Berkeley Planning Journal, Urban China, and other publications. He has edited the books Factory Towns of South China and Urban Villages of South China, and is currently writing a book on Las Vegas called The Strip.

Symposium Talk: May 15, 3 PM

Online

The Center serves most of its users through its web portal, http://gaming.unlv.edu. Through the site, the Center makes available information on a variety of gaming jurisdictions; provides corporate histories and research links; hosts several online exhibits and publishes monthly analyses for Nevada gaming revenue statistics and numerous other statistical reports highlighting several aspects of the gaming industry in the United States and around the world.

In 2013, the site had 175,859 page views, 86,934 visits and 67,528 unique visitors from all over the world.

Approximately two-thirds of visitors to the site came from the United States, with Canada, the United Kingdom, India, and Macau rounding out the top five.

The Reports and Exhibits sections continue to be the website’s most popular sections, demonstrating the continued interest in the Center’s collections and on-going work.
Reports

In 2014, the Center released or updated more than seven dozen reports on a variety of topics. These reports help to communicate and clarify major trends in the gaming industry, with an emphasis on Nevada. They included:

**Nevada Gaming Statistics: Monthly Comparison.** This report digests relevant data from the Nevada Gaming Control Board into an easily-understood comparative analysis. (12 monthly reports)

**Nevada Gaming Statistics: The Last Six Months.** Updated monthly, this rolling analysis summarizes the past half-year of financial performance for Nevada gaming. (12 monthly reports)

**Average Big Las Vegas Strip Casino, 2013.** A statistical summary of the average Las Vegas Strip casino (with annual gaming revenues of over $72 million) with both gaming and non-gaming revenues and information on employment, taxes, and expenses.

**Average Downtown Las Vegas Casino, 2013.** A statistical summary of the average Downtown Las Vegas casino (with annual gaming revenues of over $1 million) with both gaming and non-gaming revenues and information on employment, taxes, and expenses.

**Average Reno Casino, 2013.** A statistical summary of the average Reno/Sparks casino (with annual gaming revenues of over $1 million) with both gaming and non-gaming revenues and information on employment, taxes, and expenses.

**Nevada Table Games: Historical Hold Percentage Variations.** Annual hold percentage averages, with monthly maximum and minimums, 1992-2013.

**Las Vegas Strip Table Mix.** The Evolution of Casino Games, 1985-2013.

**Nevada Gaming Revenues, 1984-2013.** Calendar Year Revenues for Selected Reporting Areas.

**Nevada Casinos: Departmental Revenues, 1984-2013.** Breakdown of Nevada casino resort revenues generated by Gaming, Rooms, Food, Beverage, and Other Departments by fiscal year.


**Nevada Casino Credit, 1980-2013.** An analysis of bad debt write-offs by reporting area.

**Nevada’s Gaming Footprint, 1963-2014.** A breakdown of total licenses and numbers of games, tables, and slots from 1963 to the present—restricted and non-restricted locations.

**Clark County Gaming Footprint, 1963-2014.** A breakdown of total licenses and numbers of games, tables, and slots from 1963 to the present—restricted and non-restricted locations.

**Washoe County Gaming Footprint, 1963-2014.** A breakdown of total licenses and numbers of games, tables, and slots from 1963 to the present—restricted and non-restricted locations.

**Nevada Sports Betting Totals: 1984-2013.** Annual Win, Drop, and Win Percentages for All Nevada Locations.


**Nevada Poker: The Evolution.** Statewide totals, 1992-2013, for card rooms, tables, and revenues.
Nevada Gaming Revenue: Long-Term Trends (2000-2013). Analysis of the total number of positions, slots, and table games for Nevada casinos from 2000 to the present. Charts include totals for total game categories and breakdowns for blackjack, baccarat, craps, sports books, and poker.

Atlantic City Gaming Revenue. Annual Statistics for casino, slot, and table win, 1978-2013

Atlantic City Gaming Statistics: Monthly Summaries. Monthly and year-to-date revenue results.


Ohio Casinos: Monthly Revenues. Table and slot machine operating statistics for all gaming locations.

Connecticut Tribal Casinos: Slot Data. Monthly Handle, Win, Promotional and Other Totals.

Florida Racinos: Monthly Slot Revenues. Units, Credits In, Promotional Credits, Net Revenues, and Other Metrics


Pennsylvania Casinos & Racinos. Slot, Table, and Total Revenues by Month, 2012-present.

Pennsylvania: Annual Casino Data. Fiscal Year Slot and Table Metrics by location.


United States Online Gaming. Monthly statewide and national revenue data for online gaming.

United States Commercial Casino Revenues. This report tracks the annual calendar year revenue totals for all commercial casinos states since 2001, with the addition of slot revenues from Connecticut’s tribal casinos.
Papers

As part of its Occasional Paper Series, launched in 2010, the Center publishes brief studies of gambling and casinos with a policy and public-interest orientation.

These papers are generally between three and six-thousand words, written with the intent of informing the public discussion of gambling and casinos. Topics include gaming history, casino management, and studies in sociology, economics, and political science related to gambling.

Authors include faculty affiliated with the Center for Gaming Research, particularly Eadington Fellows. As part of their residency, fellows complete a paper for the series.

In 2014, the Center published 7 papers.


This paper explores how Las Vegas casino developers have competed with architectural design. Throughout history, they emphasized different elements of the casino complex. This paper will examine three of the most heated wars that occurred between casinos over such elements: the swimming pool wars of the 1950s, the sign wars of the 1960s, and the porte cochère wars of the 1970s. This paper argues how, in the face of competition, each of these elements evolved into truly unique forms that differed greatly from other places. In its relentless pursuit to attract visitors, Las Vegas lay on the forefront of architectural experimentation.

Paper 29, September 2014: Michelle Minton: “The Original Intent of the Wire Act and Its Implications for State-based Legalization of Internet Gambling”

Recognizing the growing threat of organized crime, then U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy sought to get the “bankrollers and kingpins” by introducing the Federal Wire Act in 1961, which sought to target the mob’s most profitable racket—bookkeeping on horseracing and sports gambling by prohibiting such gambling on the nation’s communication system at the time (telephone and telegraph). More than 30 years later members of Congress sought to use the Wire Act to stop the rise of casino-style gambling on the Internet. However, the scope of the Wire Act has been disputed among lawmakers, courts, and federal agencies. In 2011 the Office of Legal Counsel in the Department of Justice announced its belief that the Act applied only to sports gambling, dispelling ambiguity and opening the door for states to legalize intrastate non-sport online gambling, such as lottery ticket sales and Internet poker. This paper examines the historical context in which Congress enacted the 1961 Wire Act and the interpretation of the Act over five decades and its implications for present-day regulatory proposals.


This paper explores new, game-based volunteering platforms in the sciences and discusses their viability for nonprofit organizations, which have long used gaming for fundraising but not typically in other aspects of their operations. The paper unfolds in two parts. Examples of game-based volunteering platforms in the sciences are examined in Part 1, and their broader significance discussed in regard to the history of science and the history of gaming. The games in question enable volunteers to work remotely with scientific research data and assist with data processing and information management. In Part 2, the paper outlines information management challenges in the nonprofit domain and articulates possible design modifications to the gamebased platforms being developed in the sciences that would make them potentially workable for nonprofits. The modifications proposed, informed by the idea of “context-rich” design, draw inspiration from research into player habits and preferences within existing nonprofit gaming culture, with a focus on bingo,
a highly popular form of NPO gaming that normally involves the analysis of individual and clustered number tables.


This paper examines Monte Carlo in the late-nineteenth century and Las Vegas in the mid-twentieth century, and explores how the cities forged specific identities centered upon their casino-resort industries. Civic planners, entrepreneurs, and tourists contributed to the formation of a spatial imaginary (the conception of a place, laden with symbols and infused with meaning designed to evoke certain feelings or experiences, which is also mediated and re-mediated through the imagination) in these gambling centers. Casino-resorts came to dominate the economies of these cities and casino-concessionaires, business bureaus, and elites consistently emphasized the luxuriousness, spectacle, and cosmopolitanism of their casino-resort towns. This paper argues that the constant emphasis on luxury, spectacle, and cosmopolitanism allowed these casino-resort towns to appeal to a wide-ranging clientele and to remain commercially viable over time. This comparative study also briefly examines how other tourist-resort centers, from Dubai to Rio de Janeiro and Bangkok to Macau, have sought to emulate the successful promotional model set forth by Monte Carlo and Las Vegas.


Gambling has always led to addictive behavior in some individuals. However, the number and types of addicted gamblers have changed over time and in response to specific gambling environments. Recent work by historians, journalists, and anthropologists, reviewed in this paper, suggests that the situation worsened during the modern era, and that it has become worse still during the last half century. Technological, organizational, and marketing innovations have “weaponized” gambling, increasing both the likelihood that people will gamble and that they will gamble compulsively—a phenomenon with parallels to several other consumer products, including processed food, digitized games, and psychoactive drugs.


This paper explores the rise and fall of the “family-friendly” Las Vegas marketing era. Through analysis of casino advertisements, internal and external building infrastructure, and qualitative in-depth interviews with industry insiders, this work investigates the city’s reinvention of the early 1990s. Key factors that set the stage for the emergence of targeted family marketing are identified, addressing why this advertising approach ultimately did not sustain. Unique marketing case studies are identified throughout.


An exploration of Billy Graham’s 1978 Christian Crusade in Las Vegas, this paper argues that the Billy Graham Evangelical Association (BGEA) developed distinctly Vegas-styled evangelical tactics to address challenges posed by the city’s fragile religious infrastructure and competing attractions on the Las Vegas Strip. To organize a spectacular and successful ecumenical event that would garner local and national attention, BGEA simultaneously leveraged popular notions of Vegas as “Sin City” while recruiting Christian evangelicals from beyond the city proper to temporarily transform the religious ecology of the Strip.
Podcasts

In December 2008, the UNLV Center for Gaming Research launched the UNLV Gaming Podcast in an effort to bring the successful Gaming Research Colloquium to a broader audience.

The podcasts feature audio presentations of the Colloquia, interviews with gaming authors, researchers, and assorted gaming industry figures, including architects, executives, and operators. They are available through subscription in the iTunes store and on the Center’s website. In 2014, the Center released ten. They included:

64-November 18, 2014: Jack Harpster
“The Curious Life of Nevada’s Lavere Redfield,” author interview.

63-May 30, 2014: Richard Williams

62-May 15, 2014: Stefan Al

61-April 11, 2014: Stephen Andrade

60-April 3, 2014: Matias Karekallas

2014 Eadington fellow Michelle Robinson
59-**March 27, 2014: Lee Scrivner**


58-**March 21, 2014: Robert Miller**

“Paradise of Spectacle: Imagining and Re-presenting Casino Resorts as Spaces of Luxury and Leisure in the Twentieth Century,” Gaming Research Colloquium talk.

57-**March 18, 2014: Michelle Robinson**


56-**March 3, 2014: Jay Sarno Roundtable**

Audio of the 3/2/2014 UNLV Libraries Jay Sarno Roundtable event featuring Oscar Goodman, Mel Larson, Dana Gentry, Jay C. Sarno, September Sarno, Freddie Sarno, and Heidi Sarno Straus. The panel is moderated by CGR Director and *Grandissimo* author David G. Schwartz.

55-**February 23, 2014: Larry Gragg**

Staying Connected

In 2014 the Center was in the news a great deal, chiefly due to the director’s frequent media appearances. This included a total of 405 interviews with print, online, television, radio, and podcast outlets.

If you would like to stay connected with the Center for Gaming Research, please:

- Follow us on Twitter @unlvgaming
- Like us on Facebook UNLVGamingResearch
- Sign up for the monthly email update: http://gaming.unlv.edu

Stay tuned for more exciting news from the Center in 2015.