

GAMBLING ADDICTIONS ON THE INTERNET

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OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

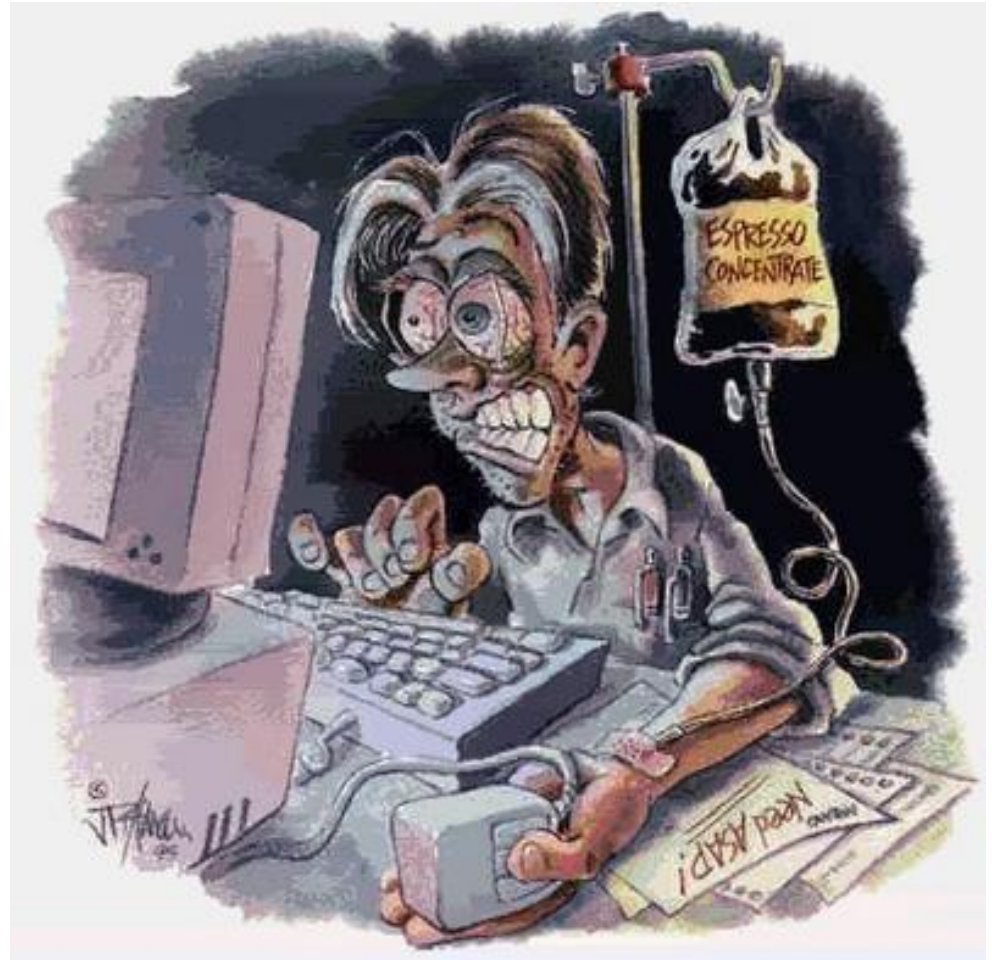
- Online addiction
- Factors that make Internet gambling attractive to punters
- Online poker and betting exchanges
- Cultural implications of increased internet gambling technology
- British Gambling Prevalence Surveys (Internet gambling secondary analysis)
- Can problem gambling online be identified online?



KEY ADDICTION QUESTIONS

(Griffiths, 1998)

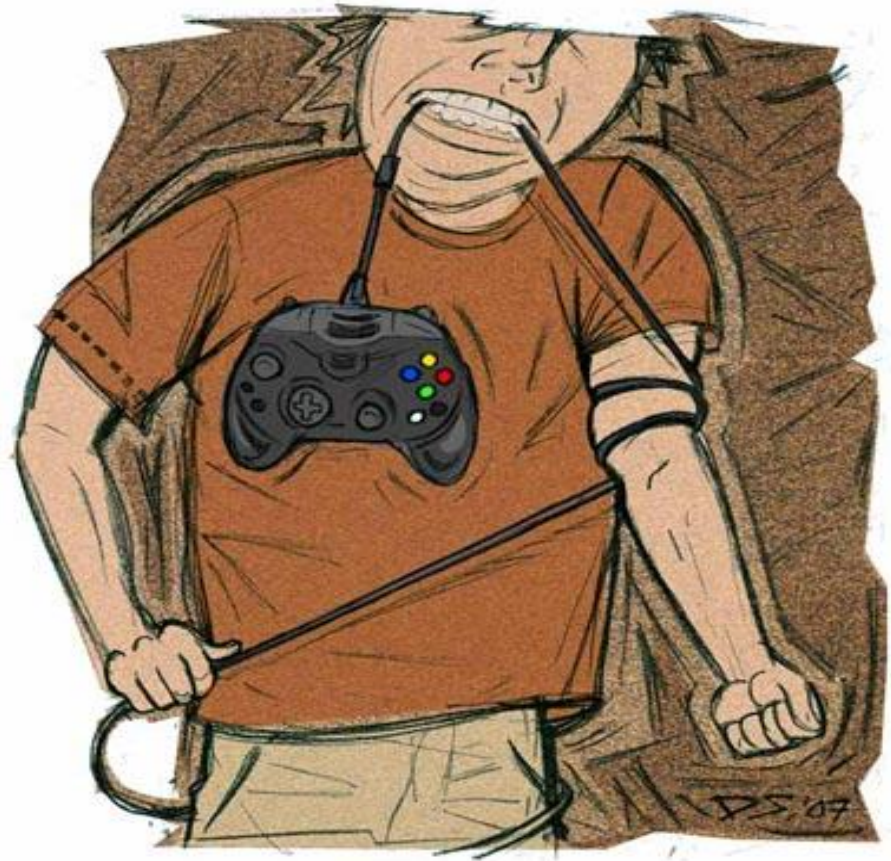
- What is addiction?
- Do online addictions exist?
- If online addiction exists what are people actually addicted to?



ADDICTION COMPONENTS

(Griffiths, 1995; 1996; 2005; 2009)

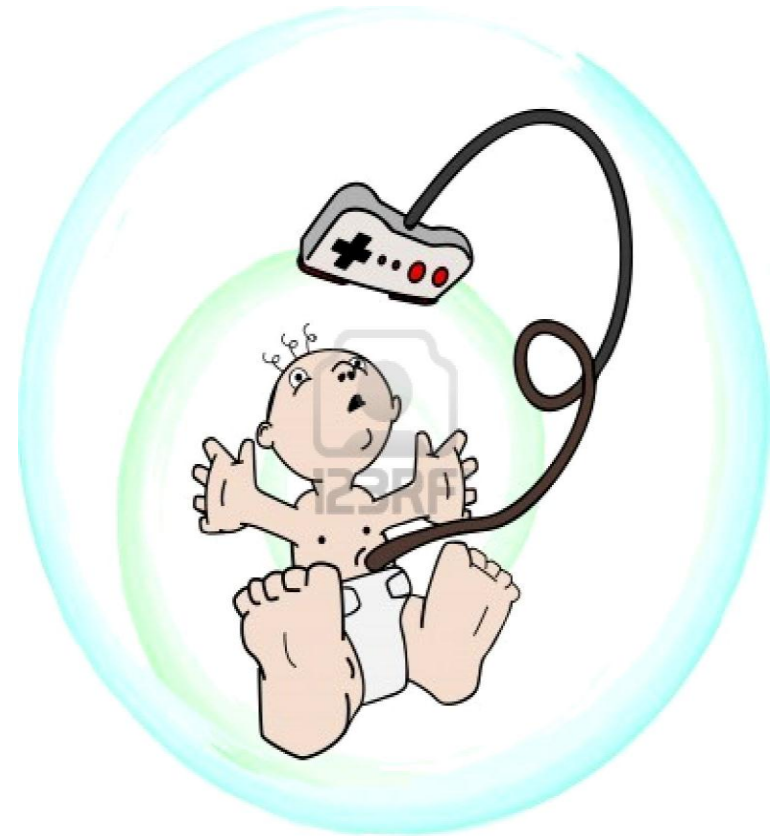
- **Salience**
- **Mood modification**
- **Tolerance**
- **Withdrawal**
- **Conflict**
- **Relapse**



TECHNOLOGICAL ADDICTIONS

(Griffiths, 1995; 2008)

- Technological addictions are operationally defined as non-chemical (behavioural) addictions that involve excessive human-machine interaction
- Usually contain inducing and reinforcing features which may contribute to the promotion of addictive tendencies
- Feature all the core components of addiction



GENERIC FACTORS THAT FACILITATE INTERNET USE

(Griffiths, 2003; Griffiths, Parke, Wood & Parke, 2006)

- Access
- Affordability
- Anonymity
- Convenience
- Disinhibition
- Escape
- Social acceptability



SPECIFIC FACTORS THAT MAKE INTERNET GAMBLING ATTRACTIVE TO PUNTERS

(Griffiths, Wood, Parke & Parke, 2006)

- Sophisticated gaming software
- Integrated e-cash systems (including multi-currency)
- Increased realism (e.g., “real” gambling via webcams, player and dealer avatars)
- Live remote wagering (for both gambling alone and gambling with others)
- Improving customer care systems
- Inter-gambler competition
- External legislation (e.g., smoking bans in public places)

SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS WITHIN REMOTE FORMS OF GAMBLING

- Increase in online poker playing
- Increase in gambling via betting exchanges
 - The facilitation of asocial ‘social’ games
 - The facilitation of gender swapping
 - The facilitation of multi-tabling

(Griffiths, 2003, 2005; Griffiths, Parke, Wood & Parke, 2006; Wood, Griffiths & Parke, 2007; Griffiths, Parke, Wood & Rigbye, 2010; McCormack & Griffiths, 2010)

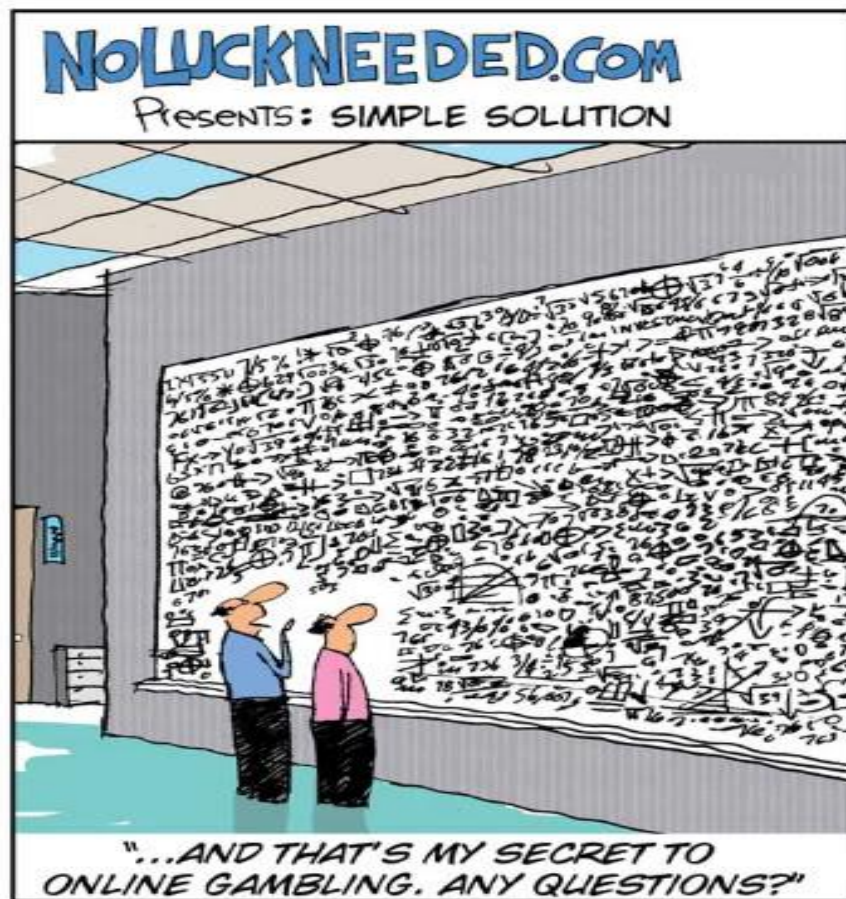
ONLINE POKER AND BETTING EXCHANGES

- In the UK, two fastest growing forms of online gambling are online poker and online betting exchanges (*Griffiths, 2005*).
- Three main reasons for the growth (*Griffiths, 2005*).
 - Provide excellent financial value for the gambler. There is no casino house edge or bookmakers' mark-up on odds.
 - Gamblers have the potential to win because there is an element of skill in making their bets.
 - Gamblers are able to compete directly with and against other gamblers instead of gambling on a pre-programmed slot machine or making a bet on a roulette wheel with fixed odds.

OTHER FACTORS IN THE RISE OF ONLINE POKER

(Wood, Griffiths & Parke, 2007; Griffiths et al, 2009)

- The social acceptability of this type of gambling
- Promotion of tournaments on terrestrial and cable channels
- Belief that this it is a game of skill that can be mastered.
- Increasing number of celebrities endorsing and playing poker
- Players can learn to play for free
- Players can play for low stakes (as low as 1 cent)
- Individuals have 24-hour access and can play at any time, any day via the Internet.



CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASED INTERNET GAMBLING TECHNOLOGY

- *Gambling comes into home and workplace*

(issues about consumer protection and legislation)

- *Gambling becomes more anonymous and "asocial"*

- *Gambling becomes more convenient and accessible*

- *Gambling becomes more socially acceptable*
-

OTHER IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASED INTERNET GAMBLING TECHNOLOGY

- Protecting vulnerable individuals
- Electronic cash (e-cash)
- Unscrupulous operators
- Regulation
- Marketing tactics
- Behavioural tracking

Sources: Griffiths & Parke (2002); Griffiths (2003); Griffiths, Parke, Wood & Parke (2006)



Mark Griffiths

BGPS: INTERNET GAMBLING SECONDARY ANALYSIS

(Griffiths et al, 2009; 2011)

- The 2007 BGPS data were further examined to see whether:
 - Any particular demographic variable was significantly associated with Internet gambling
 - Any particular demographic variable was significantly associated with non-Internet gambling.
 - The demographic profile between Internet and non-Internet gamblers was significantly different.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE (1)

- From the data collected, a new variable was created which identified those people who gambled using the Internet.
- Internet gamblers were all those participants who reported gambling online, betting online and/or gambling using a betting exchange.
- All other survey participants were either those who gambled but not online, or those who did not gamble at all.



"I'm from the health department. I, along with the other 2 million residents in this city, would like you to stop gambling online long enough to shower."

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE (2)

- It should also be noted that the prevalence of Internet gamblers in this study was likely to be lower than the true prevalence
- Those who used the Internet to play the National Lottery or one of its associated products were not included.
- Secondary analysis carried out on participants who gambled using the Internet (n = 476) and compared socio-demographic characteristics of this group against non-Internet gamblers



"I know it's 10 below in here. It keeps me awake and alert while I'm gambling online."

INTERNET GAMBLING AND TYPE OF GAMBLING ACTIVITY

- Internet gambling prevalence was also examined by gambling activity. Those most likely to have gambled on the Internet
 - Spread betting (64%)
 - Fixed odds betting terminals (47%)
 - Casino games (38%)
 - Football pools (27%)
 - Greyhounds (24%)
 - Slot machines (20%)
 - Horses (17%)
 - Scratchcards (13%)
 - Bingo (12%)
 - National Lottery draw (8%)

PROBLEM INTERNET GAMBLING

- Overall, PG prevalence among Internet gamblers using the DSM-IV was 5%.
- The base sizes were too small to analyse by age and gender but an analysis by age showed that PG prevalence rate peaked at 5.7% in the 35-54 year age group.
- Further analysis of DSM-IV scores showed that PG prevalence rate was significantly higher among Internet gamblers than non-Internet gamblers (5% vs 0.5%) ($F(1,158) = 52.09; p < 0.001$).



"AND WILL YOU, BOB, STOP GAMBLING ONLINE LONG ENOUGH TO SAY 'I DO?'"

OVERVIEW OF BGPS FINDINGS

- Study is the first ever analysis of a **representative national sample** of Internet gamblers.
- When compared to non-Internet gamblers, Internet gamblers were more likely to be **male**, relatively **young adults**, **single, well educated**, and in **professional/managerial employment**.
- **Problem gambling** (as measured by the DSM-IV) was also **significantly more likely among Internet gamblers** when compared to non-Internet gamblers.



- **Spread bettors, FOBT players, and casino patrons** were the most likely to have also used the internet to gamble.
- These types of gambling are very closely associated with **dedicated gambling environments** and gaming operators.

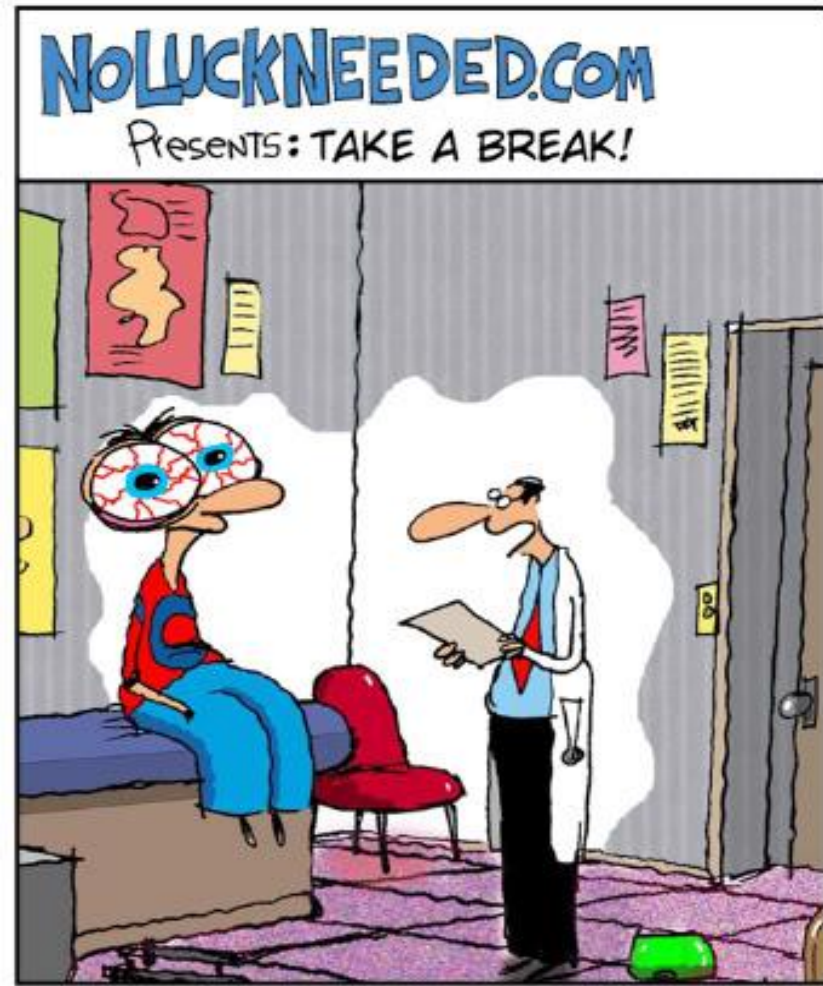
- In essence, individuals engaged in these types of gambling activity are **people who seek out particular gambling experiences** in particular types of environment

- It is perhaps therefore no surprise that it is these individuals who are also more likely to gamble on the Internet as they are looking for **value** and **convenience**



"If you're not too busy, can you do me a favor? All I need is you to design me a multi-million dollar online casino. You've got 2 days, and I'll pay you 30 bucks."

- **Internet gamblers were more likely to be problem gamblers** has been reported previously in a number of smaller scale studies
- Internet gambling could be a **less protective environment** for vulnerable gamblers
- To a problem gambler, Internet provides possibility for **24/7 gambling** all year round from comfort of one's own home.
- Given the **low levels of social responsibility** found in studies of Internet gambling sites this is of particular concern.



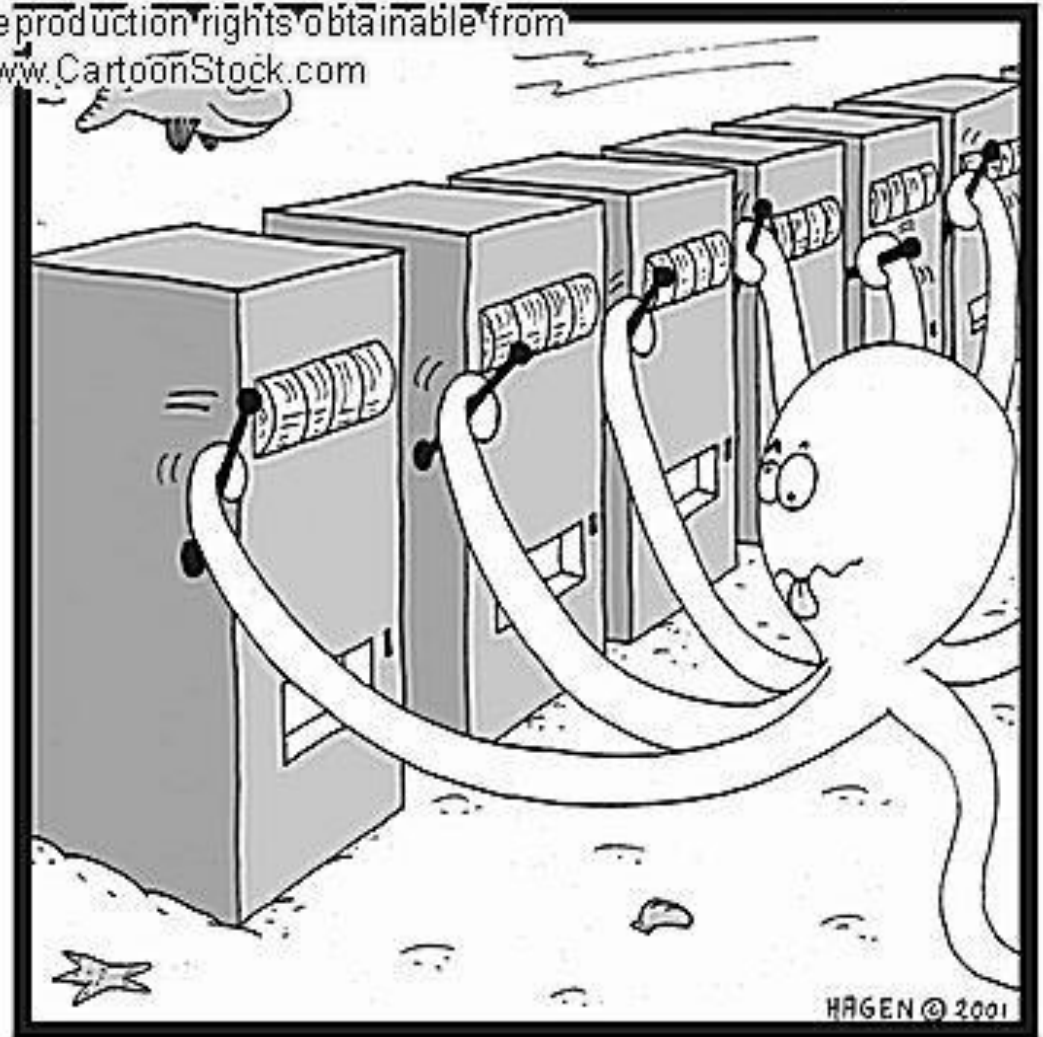
"YOUR EYES APPEAR TO BE A LITTLE IRRITATED. GAMBLING ONLINE FOR 3 MONTHS STRAIGHT WITHOUT SLEEPING MAY BE THE CAUSE."

- Gaming companies need to acknowledge they will need to provide even **better social responsibility infrastructures**

online than offline - some companies are starting to do this.

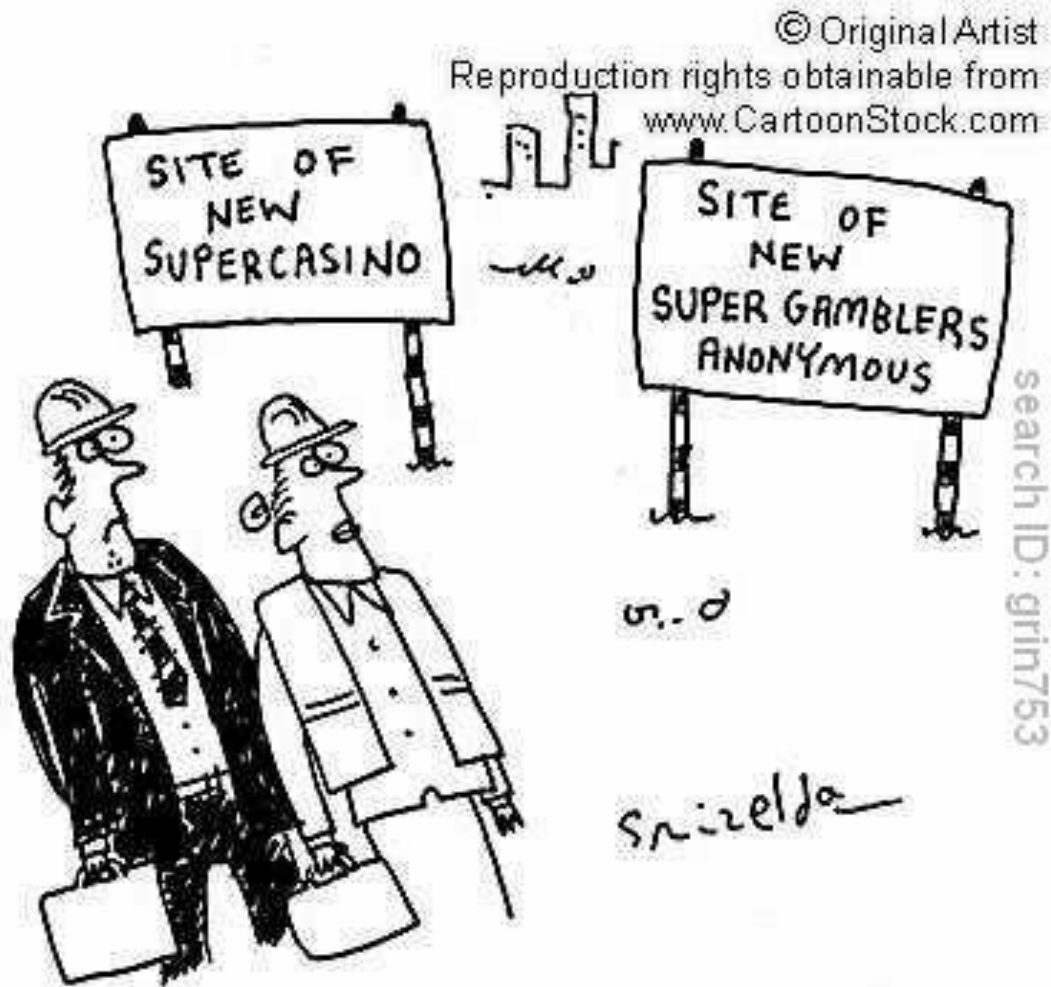
- Furthermore, there is also the issue of how Internet problem gamblers **can be helped**

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Compulsive gambling

search ID: cga0170



- Recent research suggests that online problem gamblers appear to **prefer to seek help online**

- **Online help, guidance and treatment** may be a potential way forward to help those who may feel too stigmatised to seek traditional face-to-face help

BGPS 2010 SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

(Wardle, Moody, Griffiths, Orford & Volberg, 2011)

- One of the aims was to explore whether there were any differences in profile between people who choose to gamble in certain modes and consider, briefly, whether gambling behaviour varied between these groups (n=7756)
- Offline gambling only (80.5%; 0.9%/0.4%)
- Online gambling only (2.1%; 0%)
- Mixed mode gambling - different activities (6.8%; 4.3%/3.4%)
- Mixed mode gambling – same activities (10.6%; 2.4%/0.8%)

ONLINE BEHAVIOURAL TRACKING FOR PG SCREENING CRITERIA: IMPLICATIONS

- Various members of the online gambling industry have claimed that problem gambling can be identified online.
- If this is true, it has implications for current problem gambling screening instruments.
- A brief analysis of the extent to which each DSM-5 criterion of problem gambling can be identified online shows that only a few behaviours can be identified



DSM-5 CRITERIA FOR GAMBLING DISORDER

- Is preoccupied with gambling (e.g. reliving past experiences, planning next venture, thinking of ways to get money)
- Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement
- Repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling
- Is restless or irritable when trying to cut down or stop gambling
- Gambles as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g. helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression)
- After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even (“chasing” one’s losses)
- Lies to family members, therapist, or others to conceal extent of involvement with gambling
- Has jeopardised or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling
- Relies on others to provide money to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling

CAN ONLINE TRACKING BE IDENTIFIED USING DSM-5 CRITERIA?

- **Salience/Preoccupation** (good possibility)
- **Tolerance** (possibly)
- **Relapse** (possibly)
- **Withdrawal** (unlikely)
- **Escape from reality** (unlikely)
- **Chasing losses** (definitely)
- **Conceal involvement** (unlikely)
- **Unsociable behaviour** (unlikely)
- **Ruin a relationship/opportunity** (unlikely)
- **Bail-out** (slight possibility)

PROBLEM GAMBLING BEHAVIOUR ONLINE USING TRACKING DATA

- **Chasing losses**
- **Total preoccupation with gambling**
- **Increase of gambling behaviour (time & money) over time**
- **Playing a variety of stakes**
- **Playing a variety of games**
- **Player 'reload' within gambling session**
- **Frequent payment method changes**
- **[Verbal aggression in chat rooms]**
- **[Constant complaints to customer services]**
- **Most importantly it is change in usual behaviour**

SOME OBSERVATIONS

- Purpose was to demonstrate how online gambling in Britain is integrated with other gambling behaviour
- Suggests more holistic perspective be used when thinking about these issues
- The findings have been generated from a jurisdiction that is widely considered to have one of the most accessible gambling markets in the world
- Are findings transferable to other jurisdictions with less mature gambling markets.
- Key question: How is online gambling adding to and/or complementing the existing gambling offer?



"Instead of me actually working, how about you just let me gamble online all day? I'll give you 2% of anything I win."

INTERNET GAMBLING: KEY EMPIRICAL FINDINGS SUMMARY

- Internet gamblers were more likely to be male, relatively young adults, single, well educated, and in professional/managerial employment (*Griffiths et al, 2009; Wardle et al, 2011*).
- Problem gambling prevalence rate is significantly higher among Internet gamblers than non-Internet gamblers (*Griffiths et al, 2009; 2010; Wood, Griffiths & Parke, 2007; Griffiths & Barnes, 2008*).
- Adolescents are gambling on the Internet (*Wood, Griffiths, et al, 2007; Ipsos MORI, 2009; Griffiths & Parke, 2010*).
- Increasing numbers of women gambling remotely and gender swapping is common (*IGRU, 2007; Griffiths et al, 2007*).

FINAL WORDS

- Internet gambling cannot be viewed in multi-media isolation (*Griffiths, 2003; Griffiths et al, 2006; King, Delfabbro & Griffiths, 2010*).
- ‘Lean forward’ (internet) vs. ‘lean back’ (TV) medium -This may have implications for the types of gambling done in particular media.
- TV quiz shows as gambling? (*Griffiths, 2007*)
- Convergence between gambling and gaming (*Griffiths, 2008; King et al 2010; Griffiths et al, 2014*)
- Where is gambling going? Satellite navigation systems? *Google Earth?*

