

THE ORAL HISTORY OF CONSTANCE R. JONES

PARTICIPANTS: HON. BECKY HARRIS¹ AND CONSTANCE R. JONES²

Today, we know you as a visionary leader in Responsible Gaming and Problem Gambling (RG/PG), though you have also been a trailblazer for female participation in the gaming industry. You came of age professionally in a time when the workplace was an especially challenging environment for women. Given the unique challenges that women have faced, how was it that you overcame the initial barriers to entry and made it into the gaming industry?

I'm not so sure about the "visionary" aspect but thank you.

I began my career as a horse trainer, spending more than ten years raising, training, and showing quarter horses in Montana. I then segued into judging horse shows and often dealt with inflated male egos. Horse training in Montana was risky and didn't pay well so I needed a new gig.

The next ten years were spent in the mining industry. I was employed by a large talc mining operation in the Madison Valley famous for trout fishing (Yes, the setting of "A River Runs Through It"). The Yellowstone Mine is the largest talc ore body in North America. Environmental initiatives and proposed changes to the 1872 Mining Law threatened the existence of this mining operation, which was a major employer in the community. As a result, I became a spokesperson for the mine, defending it at numerous public hearings and ultimately joining over 100 women in Washington D.C. to lobby against proposed mining law reforms. It was believed that members of Congress might be more receptive to hearing from women in the industry. These women who advocated for the mine included engineers, geologists, big equipment operators, and senior executives. It was a remarkable experience. We were dubbed "Women in Mining."

In 1981, I was the first woman to run for the Montana House of Representatives seat in my district which was comprised of farms, ranches, mining, and timber interests. Many of the old ranchers told me, during my

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campaign, that they felt I was the best candidate, but they just could not accept a female representative in that seat. I lost by nine votes.

After my unsuccessful bid for public office, Governor Stan Stevens appointed me to the Governor's "Council for the Future"—an economic development think tank—overseen by Chuck Brooke, former Montana State Lottery Director and head of the Department of Commerce.

My career in the gaming industry began in 1993 as a member of the government relations (GR) team of a small company called Video Lottery Technologies (VLTech), later called Video Lottery Consultants (VLC), based in Bozeman, Montana. I was recruited by Mr. Brooke, who had departed state government and was now VL Tech's head of government relations. He recalled me from the Governor's Economic Development Council a couple of years earlier. Mr. Brooke revealed that in a formal photo of the VL Tech's leadership team, there were no women! Someone jested that I was hired not only for my toughness in the mining industry, but to be the "token woman" in the company (not funny). It really was the "good ole boy" world back then.

Essentially, I went from working in the male-dominated resource industries (mining, ranching, timber), to gambling—again a man's domain.

And how did you end up in Responsible Gaming?

After the successful North American legalization of video lottery terminals (VLTs)—digital slot machines—Video Lottery Technologies was making money and growing rapidly by placing VLTs in convenience locations like bars, pubs, restaurants, and clubs. Not long after, a major public backlash alleging harms caused by VLTs emerged.

Elections and petitions to repeal VLTs, as well as legislative challenges to existing VLTs, erupted. PG threatened to decimate our market. VLTs were coined the "crack cocaine" of gambling. Video Lottery Technologies, now renamed Powerhouse Technologies, needed someone to address PG issues. In 1999, Powerhouse CEO Richard Haddrill announced my appointment as "Director of Responsible Gaming." I was the first person named to this position on the machine manufacturing side of the gambling industry. Harrah's, under CEO Phil Satre, also embraced RG at this time with the Bet Smart and Project 21 programs. Today, there are more people in RG positions than I can name—both men and women. Powerhouse was later acquired by Anchor Gaming, which was bought by slot machine giant International Gaming Technology (IGT) a year later. I miraculously survived these transitions and went on to implement the first RG Program for IGT, which was also the first RG program on the machine manufacturing side of gambling.

In my position as Director of RG for IGT, I worked with its GR team to discuss player protections for games. We met with government officials who were considering expansion both in the U.S. and abroad. It was important for regulators to understand which controls were effective and which were not. RG tools such as pop-up reminders and self-limiting options on VLTs were implemented in Canada and elsewhere. Many new RG machine modifications

were being introduced without adequate research to prove efficacy, not to mention the impact on patron enjoyment and revenue loss. I conducted RG training at lottery facilities and racetracks. I also interfaced directly with problem gambling organizations to help them better understand the role of the game and machine manufacturer. I stressed that our intention was not to cause addiction but to provide an exciting form of entertainment.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role in RG was interfacing with the PG community and gaining an understanding of gambling addiction and its many complications. My role served as a bridge of communication between the manufacturing segment of the gaming industry and the PG community. In that capacity, I served for twelve years on the Board of Directors of the National Council on Problem Gambling, the largest PG advocacy organization in North America. I had the honor of working with Dr. Robert Hunter, founder and head of the Problem Gambling Center (PGC) in Las Vegas, for many years prior to his death. I was appointed to his Board many years ago, and I continue to serve. The Nevada Council on Problem Gambling has also been a major player on the PG stage. I have been privileged to serve on that board for many years as well.

RG allowed me the opportunity to become a player on the global stage. It has been a great adventure working with RG/PG interests in Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore. Other countries are more aggressive in their approach to RG than here in the U.S. “One size certainly does not fit all” due to the differences in cultures and governmental public policy priorities.

In 2014, I transitioned from IGT to take on the role of Director of Responsible Gaming for the Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers (AGEM). This shift expanded my role to include not only IGT but most, if not all, the major machine manufacturers as well as the supplier sector. AGEM now has over 170 member companies globally.

Describe the series of events that led to the creation of the first “Director of Responsible Gaming” role. Beyond a job description, how would you broadly characterize the responsibilities and overarching duties that come with this role?

There were three major factors driving machine manufacturers to prioritize RG and the creation of a Director of Responsible Gaming between 1998–99. They were as follows:

First, a group of 119,000 individuals brought a class action lawsuit against Loto-Quebec (the operator) alleging harms related to VLT products.³ This suit has come to be known as the *Brochu* case.⁴ Loto-Quebec argued there

³ Jonathan Montpetit, *Gambling Addicts Sue Loto-Québec*, TORONTO STAR (Aug. 18, 2008),

https://www.thestar.com/life/health_wellness/diseases_cures/2008/08/18/gambling_addicts_sue_lotoqueacutebec.html.

⁴ *Brochu v. Loto-Québec (Société des loteries)* 2010 QCCS 1138, 2010 CarswellQue 2494, 189 A.C.W.S. (3d) 609, J.E. 2010-776, EYB 2010-171457.

was no legal liability for problem gambling because it should be characterized as a “personal health issue.”⁵

Second, following the filing of the lawsuit, most of the Canadian VLT jurisdictions held plebiscites or elections to potentially repeal their VLT programs. A legislative challenge to the VLT program in South Dakota was initiated, and petitions to repeal VLT programs were also circulating in both Montana and Oregon. In the meantime, the province of Ontario had been in the process of adopting a VLT program and had informally committed to the vendor. Buckling to the mounting pressures, the province abruptly canceled its order of machines, declaring VLTs too addictive. The vendor later sued the Ontario Lottery for “Bad Faith Bargaining” and settled out of court.

Third, a federally appointed body called the National Gambling Impact Study Commission (NGISC) was tasked with conducting a comprehensive legal and factual study of the social and economic implications of gambling in the United States. Among the NGISC recommendations was the proposal that because VLTs were harmful, no further expansion should be allowed. The VLT market was substantial and one the machine manufacturers could ill afford to lose. Around the same time, the American Gaming Association created the National Center for Responsible Gaming, which has now transitioned into the International Center for Responsible Gaming.

The act of creating a “Director of Responsible Gaming” office was indicative of a major shift among industry stakeholders. For you specifically, what catalyzed your personal transition from gaming generally into the responsible gaming space?

The class action lawsuit in Quebec that highlighted gambling-related harms was a major catalyst. I was charged with identifying the best team of PG experts in the world for the machine manufacturers’ defense—and we did end up with the best. Of the three VLT manufacturers in Quebec, one voluntarily intervened in the main action, and in 2003, Loto-Quebec brought warranty charges against VLC and the other game provider.⁶ As a consequence, the manufacturers agreed to help finance the defense, as well as provide any other support deemed necessary. The operator pointed out that this was a product safety issue with no malfeasance on its part.

Not being a gambler myself, I was completely unaware that the games on the benign-looking VLTs could be harmful. In my new RG role, I attended my first national conference on PG and began to learn first-hand about the pain caused by gambling addiction.

On the balance, would you say that RG/PG is a consumer protection issue? If so, what role do third-party providers play in making it so? As the only

⁵ Montpetit, *supra* note 3.

⁶ *Brochu v. Loto-Québec*, Motion by Defense, No. 200-06-000017-015, on file with the author.

suit at the time to explicitly list a specific manufacturer, did Brochu shape your opinion on RG/PG as a consumer protection issue?

In the *Brochu* case, the claims against the operator, Loto-Quebec, may have been viewed as a consumer safety issue, but as mentioned above, the lottery pointed to the three game providers and alleged that the games were unsafe.⁷

The allegations in the *Brochu* case closely paralleled the “big tobacco” lawsuit, which claimed tobacco contained addictive elements and that the risk of addiction was not disclosed to the consumer.⁸ Subsequent class actions, as well as cases by individuals, have been filed throughout Canada.⁹ In these cases, both the operators and the manufacturers were named as defendants. To my knowledge, none ever resulted in a settlement.

In Australia, a similar case was brought by Shonica Guy.¹⁰ Ms. Guy brought suit against both casino giant Crown Resorts (Crown) and machine manufacturer Aristocrat.¹¹ She alleged that the “Dolphin Treasure” slot machine at Crown's flagship casino in Melbourne was designed to deceive patrons about their chances of winning.¹² Guy sought injunctive relief to ban Crown from offering “Dolphin Treasure” and to prevent distribution by Aristocrat.¹³ The case centered around the five wheels in the machine, which awarded patrons prizes based on how many symbols they could match up on each wheel. While the first four wheels were the same size at about thirty symbols, the fifth wheel was much

⁷ *Brochu v. Loto-Québec*, Motion by Defense, No. 200-06-000017-015, on file with the author.

⁸ *Brochu v. Loto-Québec*, 2010 QCCS 1138. See *United States v. Phillip Morris USA, Inc.*, 449 F. Supp. 2d 988 (D.D.C. 2006).

⁹ The Canadian Press, *Loto-Quebec Reaches Settlement with Gambling Addicts*, CTV NEWS (Jan. 7, 2010), <https://www.ctvnews.ca/loto-quebec-reaches-settlement-with-gambling-addicts-1.471416?cache=yes%3FclipId%3D104069%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout>.

¹⁰ *Guy v Crown Melbourne Limited (No 2)* [2018] 36 FCA 5 (2 February 2018) (Austl.).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.* at 5.

¹³ *Id.* at 102, 165–66, 553; Jamie Nettleton & Hayden Martin, *Gaming Machines: Federal Court of Australia Dismisses Allegations of Misleading and Deceptive Conduct in Shonica Guy v Crown Melbourne Limited & Anor.*, ADDISONS (Mar. 1, 2018), <https://addisons.com/knowledge/insights/gaming-machines-federal-court-of-australia-dismisses-allegations-of-misleading-and-deceptive-conduct-in-shonica-guy-v-crown-melbourne-limited-anor/>; Daniel Peters, ‘*Gambling in Australia Is Like Guns in the U.S.’: Pokie Addict Sues Casino and Machine Manufacturer Claiming She Was ‘Deceived’ About Her Chances of Winning on ‘Dolphin Treasure’*’, DAILY MAIL (Sept. 12, 2017, 8:38 AM), <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4875056/Melbourne-woman-Shonica-Guy-sues-Crown-Casino-pokies-maker.html>.

larger with forty-four symbols, thus making it more difficult than it appeared to match all five. Again, attempting to show a deceptive product.¹⁴

The Federal Court ruled the machine complied with gaming regulations and cleared Crown Casino and Aristocrat of any wrongdoing.¹⁵ Justice Mortimer emphasized that the case highlighted complex issues about how consumers are protected by the way the goods and services of the gaming industry are regulated, even though harm may come to some members of the community.¹⁶

So yes, the manner in which RG is implemented in a casino and game design have been framed as “consumer protection issues.” However, in the *Brochu* case, game design characteristics thought to cause harm were considered by the court to be product safety issues.

There was one similar lawsuit in the U.S. It was a wrongful death claim in West Virginia. Suit was filed by the widow of Scott Stevens, who claimed from 2007 to the day he died, Stevens was a regular patron at Mountaineer Casino, Racetrack and Resort (MTR), where he played the slot machines and, over time, became hopelessly addicted to gambling.¹⁷ The suit claimed Stevens’s suicide was the result of a gambling addiction that was fostered by the software used in IGT’s terminals, which employ “features that deceptively cause gamblers to play longer, more quickly, and more intensely. The machines are allegedly designed to cause physiological change in brain functioning, which promotes the loss of willpower and curtails the capacity to make rational decisions[,]” and “erode the players’ ability to walk away before they have exhausted their available funds.”¹⁸ Therefore, the slot machines were alleged to have been “defectively designed” and “not reasonably safe for their intended use.”¹⁹

MTR was alleged to have “facilitate[d] the compulsive behavior engendered by the machines by targeting affected patrons with marketing ploys such as offering complementary food and lodging, and by tendering lines of credit on terms that would not otherwise be bargained for.”²⁰

Ultimately, the lawsuit rested upon the question of whether MTR and IGT had a “duty of care” to protect patrons from becoming addicted to gambling.²¹ The court found that the West Virginia Legislature had declined to establish a duty of care for compulsive gamblers.²²

The judge further concluded that the remedies provided by the Legislature to attenuate the social harm that can be occasioned by video lottery terminals, that is, the establishment of a fund and administrative scheme . . . to

¹⁴ *Guy v Crown Melbourne Limited (No 2)* [2018] FCA 36 ¶¶ 5, 6, 60 (2 February 2018) (Austl.).

¹⁵ *Id.* at 160.

¹⁶ *Id.* at 100, 143, 152, 159–60, 170.

¹⁷ *Stevens v. MTR Gaming Group, Inc.*, 788 S.E.2d 59, 61 (2016).

¹⁸ *Id.* at 3.

¹⁹ *Id.* at 4.

²⁰ *Id.* at 61.

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.* at 8.

assist compulsive gamblers, together with the creation of an exclusion list . . . whereby such persons may deprive themselves of the opportunity to gamble, are intended to be exclusive.²³

The Brochu settlement in Québec was disappointing to many consumer advocates. Without settlement, what would the outcome have been? Would you have preferred to see it play out in court? In your view, what would justice have looked like in Brochu? How did Brochu affect the RG/PG landscape?

The lawsuit was in the discovery phase for eight years²⁴ prior to going to trial which lasted two years and culminated in a settlement.²⁵ Plaintiffs initially asked for \$1 billion CDN in damages but settled for around \$50 million CDN.²⁶ Monetary awards were provided in the form of reimbursement for treatment received by those alleging harm from PG.²⁷ A condition of the settlement was that the plaintiffs had to agree that the VLTs were not the sole cause for their addiction and related harms.²⁸ After attending many, many conferences on gambling addiction, I've learned that, more often than not, other addictions (comorbidity) such as substance abuse are involved.²⁹ Pre-existing mental health issues such as depression can also be a driving factor.³⁰

Without the settlement I would have been surprised if the plaintiffs had prevailed, but the gambling industry decided not to take that chance. Had the jury decided in favor of the plaintiffs, a precedent may have been established greatly impacting the slot machine manufacturing market.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ Sol Boxenbaum, *The Class Action Suit Against Loto-Quebec or What Should Have Been*, LAST CALL WITH SOL (Mar. 30, 2010), <https://www.lastcallwithsol.com/the-class-action-suit-against-loto-quebec/> [hereinafter *The Class Action*]; Montpetit, *supra* note 2.

²⁵ *The Class Action*, *supra* note 24; *Brochu v Loto-Québec*, 2010 QCCS 1138; Canadian Press, *Loto-Quebec Reaches Settlement with Gambling Addicts*, CTV NEWS (2010), [https://www.ctvnews.ca/loto-quebec-reaches-settlement-with-gambling-addicts-](https://www.ctvnews.ca/loto-quebec-reaches-settlement-with-gambling-addicts-1.471416?cache=yes%3FclipId%3D104069%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout;Loto-QuebecSettlesonProblemGamblingClassAction)

[1.471416?cache=yes%3FclipId%3D104069%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout; Loto-Quebec Settles on Problem Gambling Class Action](https://www.ctvnews.ca/loto-quebec-reaches-settlement-with-gambling-addicts-1.471416?cache=yes%3FclipId%3D104069%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout;Loto-QuebecSettlesonProblemGamblingClassAction), REVIEWED CASINOS (Jan. 8, 2010), <https://www.reviewed-casinos.com/news/2567080110/>.

²⁶ *Loto-Quebec Settles on Problem Gambling Class Action*, REVIEWED CASINOS (Jan. 8, 2010), <https://www.reviewed-casinos.com/news/2567080110/>.

²⁷ *Id.* *Quebec Settles Gambling Addiction Lawsuit*, CBC NEWS, (Jan. 7, 2010), <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-settles-gambling-addiction-lawsuit-1.933143>.

²⁸ *The Class Action*, *supra* note 24.

²⁹ National Center for Responsible Gaming, *Comorbidity and Gambling Disorders*, https://www.icrg.org/sites/default/files/oec/pdfs/ncrg_fact_sheet_comorbidity.pdf.

³⁰ *Id.*

You have described the relationship between RG and PG as follows: “Responsible Gambling is a response to the issue of Problem Gambling.” Too many stakeholders conflate the two. To what do you attribute the confusion around the RG/PG distinction?

I really believe it is just a lack of education and awareness of two very separate but related terms. Simply stated, problem gambling is when a person’s gambling experience negatively impacts other areas of their life and/or they’re losing more than they can afford.

RG is different for patrons than for the industry. RG for patrons means gambling within their means, setting a budget, playing for entertainment, and so on. RG for industry means educating employees—not only those who interact with patrons, but those in legal, public relations, marketing, finance, game design, and other departments. RG for the industry is about long-term sustainability. I often say, “Protect your players, protect your business.”

The late Professor Bill Eadington of University Nevada, Reno famously framed the industry’s support of Responsible Gambling in terms of “enlightened self-interest.” How has “enlightened self-interest” impacted the gaming industry? Did it affect the way you approached RG/PG?

Is “enlightened self-interest” necessarily a bad thing? Often after being informed of a need, we feel good when we donate to a charity or help someone in trouble. Don’t we often need “enlightenment,” meaning knowledge or understanding, to do good? And is that not about self-interest as well? I think it is great that the gambling industry became more enlightened about the negative impacts of their product and has done something about it.

Gaming operators and manufacturers have, historically, approached RG/PG independently of one another. As the first Director of Responsible Gaming on the machine manufacturer side you had to navigate the different approaches. How has online gambling brought them together? Do you anticipate further convergence?

Yes, I do anticipate further convergence. In the past the machine manufacturers did not typically interact directly with gaming patrons, so training wasn’t necessary for patron engagement. As online gaming/gambling has been legalized on a global scale, technology providers are often engaging with patrons and need to be sensitive to a patron who may be in trouble.

What I’m seeing more frequently are third-party providers specializing in assistance for PG and providing new and enhanced RG technologies. These are most prevalent in the European gaming market.

You have been appointed and reappointed to the Nevada Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling by three Nevada governors during your distinguished career. To what do you attribute your bipartisan support?

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Luck.

How has the industry approach to RG/PG changed in the last 20 years? To what extent have these efforts kept pace with the accelerating technology development that has been taking place?

The changes I've seen in the past 20 years are astounding. There is so much new technology to help patrons stay safe while enjoying their gaming/gambling experience. I'm constantly amazed at how many gaming companies are adopting RG programs and tasking new people with implementation. The gaming industry is much more involved in RG/PG events and conferences than when I was a lone soldier. I love the fresh enthusiasm of new industry RG representatives. RG/PG conferences have tripled in size – particularly here in the US. The tension that once existed between industry and the PG community has become almost non-existent.

One can view technology as generating solutions while simultaneously creating new problems and concerns. Do you think new technological advances play a major role in an eventual RG/PG risk mitigation response?

The technology providers have been very responsive to regulatory requirements for RG features on games. These include self-limiting tools, pop-up reminders, and RG information. Unfortunately, the patron uptake has been low at around two percent. RG game features were implemented during and following the *Brochu* case in Quebec and are on all VLTs in Canada, as well as the fixed odds betting terminals in the UK and slots in Australia. Massachusetts was the first U.S. jurisdiction to adopt RG tools on games with the PlayMyWay technology. PlayMyWay is an opt-in software system that allows electronic gaming machine users to self-select daily, weekly, and/or monthly gambling spending budgets.

While it is more difficult and expensive to implement RG tools and information on games in physical locations, it is much easier to include them in online games. The question here is if you include too many RG 'speed bumps' in legalized games, will patrons prefer the unregulated games which lack any type of player protection?

You are known as an ally of the tribal gaming community. How does tribal gaming address RG/PG?

The tribes are very protective of their culture and their people. My first interaction with the tribes and RG was in New Mexico after the legalization of lottery and slots at racetracks. I was impressed with the quiet manner in which they implemented their RG initiatives. The Responsible Gaming Association of New Mexico, organized in 1997, is a collaboration of many of the state's Native American owned casinos, who work together to promote awareness of problem

gambling and the resources that are available across New Mexico. Through their efforts, the New Mexico tribes have been recognized as being at the forefront of proactive education, prevention, and treatment. No other state is known to have a similar organization. Foxwoods Resorts and the Mohegan Sun Casino have been also early adopters of RG. In the state of California most of the funding for PG comes from the tribes.

In 2021, the National Council on Problem Gambling—with support from Entain—spearheaded “Operation Responsible Gaming” in the hopes of serving the needs of military personnel past and present. What are some of the most urgent needs that an RG/PG program focused on veterans and active military ought to address?

You may be aware that the Department of Defense operates some 3,000 slot machines at U.S. military bases across the world that yield estimated annual revenues of \$100 million per year.³¹ In 2021, Senator Elizabeth Warren pointed out, “[d]espite the millions that slot machines bring in each year to Defense Department coffers, and the millions more generated by bingo games, it has never established any form of treatment program or prevention efforts to help combat gambling problems among its servicemen and women.”³² Interestingly, legislation introduced in 2018 by Senators Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Steve Daines, R-Mont., to curb this threat and provide aid to those struggling with gambling addiction never made it into law.³³

When I was with IGT, this came to my attention because IGT provided most, if not all, of the games. While I’m no longer directly involved, I believe the most urgent need is for education and awareness as well as treatment resources.

Sports betting advertisements in the aftermath of the Murphy decision are everywhere. Many have worried that legal regulated sports betting would increase problem gambling generally, create new triggers for those who currently struggle with addiction and develop new paths to problem gambling. How do the risks for various stakeholders compare, particularly for those new to sports wagering and patrons?

³¹ Gabby Means, *U.S. Military-run Slot Machines Earn \$100 Million a Year from Service Members Overseas*, NPR (July 31, 2022, 5:00 AM), <https://www.npr.org/2022/07/31/1110882487/dod-slot-machines-overseas-bases>.

³² *Slot Machines at US Army Bases Generate \$100 Million*, CASINOHUB.CC (2021), <https://casinohub.cc/14750.html>.

³³ Press Release, Warren, Daines Unveil Bipartisan Bill to Address Gambling Addiction Among Servicemembers, (May 15, 2018), <https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/warren-daines-unveil-bipartisan-bill-to-address-gambling-addiction-among-servicemembers>.

It's too early to know if the expansion of online gambling and sports betting will increase PG. Generally speaking, when any new or expanded gambling program is introduced PG increases for a year or two then drops back to pre-existing levels. Gambling advertisements became a problem in Europe leading to significant limits, and in some countries, a total ban.

While this topic may appear simple on the surface it becomes quite complicated under closer examination. Currently there isn't a great deal of research on the topic of gambling advertising and its impact on vulnerable populations. Per Binde, a prominent researcher from Sweden, has conducted some important studies.³⁴ In one study, Binde qualitatively explored the impact of gambling advertising on problem gambling by interviewing twenty-five people with current or past gambling problems.³⁵

In a more comprehensive study prepared for the Responsible Gambling Trust in the UK, Binde concluded:

[o]nly in particular conditions, such as extensive advertising for especially risky forms of gambling that are offered on an immature market with few if any player protection features (such as stake limits and no possibilities for self-exclusion), may one assume that advertising in itself substantially contributes to problem gambling. It would therefore be unrealistic to expect that general advertising restrictions would in themselves have a great preventive effect on problem gambling. Such restrictions should be coordinated with other preventive measures and together they are likely to have a significant positive effect.³⁶

The advent of esports wagering has offered a level of access to minors that was previously unimaginable. At a land-based casino property, resort staff and parents could have reasonable success in maintaining distance between children and gambling devices. In some U.S. states, children are prohibited from even entering a casino. The fact that the video games our youth have long played, are now generating wagering content, understandably, raises concerns. Now children face the real possibility of being exposed to advertisements and betting platforms before they have the capacity to understand the associated risks. With mobile phones and readily available PCs, children are unwitting targets. Is there data or an industry consensus on how to manage this early potential pathway to

³⁴ Dr. Per Binde, ASIA PAC. ASS'N FOR GAMBLING STUD., <https://gamblingstudies.org/jgcg/index.php/apcg/article/view/112/84>.

³⁵ Per Binde, *Exploring the Impact of Gambling Advertising: An Interview Study of Problem Gambler*, 7 INT'L J. MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION 541 (2009).

³⁶ Per Binde, *Gambling Advertising: A Critical Research Review*, RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING TR. (2014), https://www.begambleaware.org/sites/default/files/2020-12/binde_rgt_report_gambling_advertising_2014_final_color_115p.pdf.

problem gambling? What are some of the considerations gaming stakeholders and regulators should take into consideration?

This is a major concern in gaming markets globally. I'm glad I'm not a regulator facing this issue. There are no easy answers. In a perfect world we could separate gambling related elements in kid's games and effectively block all gambling ads from kids who play on their devices. Perhaps what is needed is public health initiative to educate children and their parents.

Throughout your career, have you come across any foundational resources people should turn to as a resource for understanding RG/PG issues?

Both the National Council on Problem Gambling and the International Center for Responsible Gaming offer a plethora of information. In Canada, the Responsible Gambling Council is the primary source for RG/PG information and Europe has a network of resources. Perhaps the most well-known is Gamcare in the UK. I work closely with the Global Gaming Guidance Group (G4) in Amsterdam and currently serve on their board. They provide more RG certifications and accreditations than anyone in the world. The Australasian Gaming Council in Melbourne, Australia is a non-profit organization formed in 2000 and is dedicated to promoting RG and furthering a sustainable gambling industry. They are my resource for anything RG/PG related in that part of the world.

You have been tireless in promoting RG/PG measures. Are there any trends in treatment, recovery, prevention, et cetera—at the level of the clinician—that make you optimistic?

I'm not a clinician but at that level, I've been encouraged by the inclusion of broader mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Reducing the stigma related to gambling addiction has also been a frequent subject in the treatment community. I believe family programs are gaining more attention as well. The Dr. Robert Hunter International Problem Gambling Center has recently developed a wonderful relapse program for those in recovery.

Where do you see RG/PG going in the next five to ten years? The next twenty years and beyond? What would you like to see happen?

As I see it today the role of RG in the gaming industry is to provide a bridge of communication between the industry, the PG community, and the general public to better facilitate understanding and advance effective player protections. Reducing the stigma related to gambling addiction is critical. Of course, there are more questions than answers when it comes to the impact of new gaming and gambling opportunities so funding for research should be a priority. The challenges in implementing RG regulations are daunting. I would

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like to see regulators meet with both industry and PG representatives to better understand which RG measures are effective.

As we sit here in September 2022, what message would you draw from your tenure as a woman in RG/PG to convey to the next generation of female leaders?

Hang in there! Encourage, mentor, and support other women. Raise awareness among our male counterparts that women are capable of more C-suite positions. Don't be afraid to ask for support from men. The success of Global Gaming Women is nothing short of astounding and I envision even greater things ahead for the ladies in our industry.