



# Gambling 2:

## A political economy of mobile and social gambling

Professor Gerda Reith  
University of Glasgow

# Gambling 2

- Techno economic systems (Castells 1996)
- Technology – capital – states
- Intensified consumption
- Trends:
  - geolocational & data tracking technologies
  - personalisation and targeting of marketing
  - online social networks



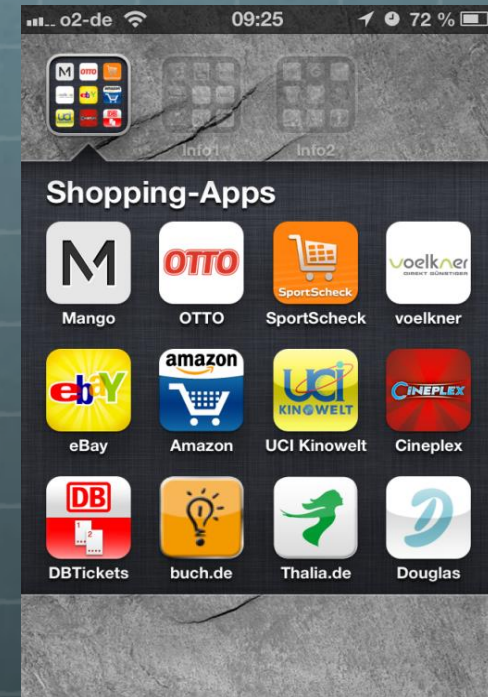
# Technology ↔ State ↔ Capital

- Post 1980s expansion of commercial gambling
- Era of 'informational capitalism' (Castells 1996)
  - Deregulation, privatization, globalization
- Technological developments: 'informational, global & networked'
  - Liberalization & credit
- Interdependence state ↔ gambling



# Consumption

- 🌐 Intensification (Hardt & Negri 2000)
- 🌐 'Turbo' consumption (Schor 2008), 'hyper' consumption (Ritzer 1993)
- 🌐 Gambling as archetypal form → produces intensified experiences
- 🌐 Dematerialisation: pure circulation & extraction of money
- 🌐 Convergence with wider operation of finance capital: divorce exchange / use values





# Technology

- 🌐 Drives capital to: ‘overcome limits of time & space’
- 🌐 Wireless technologies & digital networks
  - 🌐 ‘Disembedding’ (Giddens 1990)
  - 🌐 ‘Non places’ (Auge 1995) - circulation & consumption



# Mobile & Social Gambling

- 🌐 New frontier of gambling
- 🌐 Expansion of reach & speed
- 🌐 ‘Disembedding’ & ‘non-places’
- 🌐 ‘Turbo charged’ features



# Technology & Marketing



## Surveillance

information ↔ marketing  
feedback loops

- 🌐 Geolocational services
- 🌐 Personalisation
- 🌐 Harnessing power of social networks

# Personalization

- Smartphones : more than mere devices → ‘affective technologies’
- From expensive, generic mass marketing → cheap, agile, personalised texts
- Tailored to individual based on betting history and preferences





# Geolocational Software

- Tracks player movements, tags behavior
- Links purchasing behavior ↔ location ↔ venue information
  - targeting of promotions
  - ‘reaching a customer on the device where they can instantly take action is a very powerful tool’

[www.bulletbusiness.com/mobilegambling2013](http://www.bulletbusiness.com/mobilegambling2013)



- 🌐 Integration of mobile devices with rhythms & spaces everyday life
- 🌐 Makes gambling ubiquitous
- 🌐 Gamblers 'always on' (Shortt 2014)



# Social Media

- 🌐 ‘Affective technology’
- 🌐 Gambling / gaming: blurs boundaries
- 🌐 Social/ viral marketing
- 🌐 Incentivise players & harness social networks
- 🌐 ‘Engagement, retention, monetization’ (SOOMLA 2014)



## Tip 1 - Simply Ask Users to Connect



## Tip 2 - Make Facebook the Easiest Choice



# Value

- Freemium games & microtransactions blur distinctions 'real' money ↔ virtual money ↔ virtual goods



(SOOMLA 2014)

Does 'real' money matter...??

# Surveillance

Feedback loops ↔ gambling spaces ↔ algorithms ↔ behaviour  
'continuous control' Deleuze (1992)



**Mobile &  
social  
technologies  
exemplify new  
landscape of  
gambling**

**Games as  
perfect vehicles  
for capital  
accumulation  
↔ mirrors  
intensified logic  
of finance  
capitalism**

# References

- Auge, M. 1995 *Non-Places: An Introduction to Supermodernity*. London: Verso
- Bullet Business 2013 Marketing for and on mobile: new tactics and best practice. <http://www.bulletbusiness.com/mobilegambling/pdf/MobileMarketingWhitepaper.pdf>
- Castells, M. 1996 *The Rise of the Network Society. Volume 1: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Deleuze , G 1992 Postscript on the societies of control. *October* 59, pp3-7
- Giddens, A. 1990 *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Hardt, M and Negri, A 2000 *Empire*. Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press
- Ritzer, G. 1993 *The McDonaldisation of Society*. Thousand Oaks CA: Pine Forge
- Schor, J 2008. Tackling turbo consumption. *Cultural Studies*, 22: 5, pp588- 598
- Shortt, A 2014 Bringing gambling to the ‘always on’ consumer. *The Mobile and Tablet Gambling Summit*, USA. 28-29 October, Atlantic City.
- SOOMLA 2014 Addictive games: getting users to dream about virtual goods. *Casual Connect Europe 2014* <http://www.slideshare.net/yanivnizan/addictive-games-final>