Gambling 2:
A political economy of mobile and social gambling

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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/mobilegambling 2013
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)
Value

Freemium games & microtransactions blur distinctions ‘real’ money ↔ virtual money ↔ virtual goods.

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


Deleuze, G 1992 Postscript on the societies of control. October 59, pp3-7


