

# Political Culture and Gambling Policy: A Cross-National Study

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to find relationships between political culture and policy making on gambling in four jurisdictions, including Nevada and California, two adjacent U. S. States, and also in Great Britain and Israel. While the stages of political culture have not advanced to a tightly knit theory from which an array of testable hypotheses can flow, the concept can be helpful in understanding policy developments in gambling across national borders. Though this discussion leans toward the academic style, it offers a practical approach to cultural sensitivity that casino operatives should consider when expanding to divergent populations in new host communities, to avoid policy backlashes that may be detrimental to their gaming financial operations.

Keywords: political culture, gambling policy, gaming jurisdictions, cultural sensitivity

This paper presents four case studies. Each looks at policy on gambling and focuses on relationships of policy and political culture. An awareness of the connection between gambling and community cultures may afford developers a framework for incorporating the sensitivities of host populations toward gambling into their operational strategies. By doing so, they can avoid political backlashes that may accompany the introduction of new gaming where cultures are not traditionally welcoming to the presence of tolerated gaming activity.

Political culture is a collective mind set or patterns of thought that people have toward political objects: the political community, forms of government, leadership, political parties, political activity, the rules of participation in politics, feelings of personal obligation and efficacy, and their attitudes toward fellow citizens as political actors.

While gambling is endemic, its acceptance may reflect or be reflected by how a specific people view their place in the cosmos, their sense of personal efficacy in life, their worth vis-à-vis fellow citizens, and their acceptance of external authority over their personal behaviors. We should expect to find that gambling policy is at least in part a function of the collective belief patterns encompassed in the concept of political culture.

This is not the first effort to juxtapose the concept of culture with gambling in a comparative or international context. In 1996 Australian economist Jan McMillen edited a collection of fifteen essays written especially for *Gambling Cultures: Studies in History and Interpretation*. However, the essays did not focus upon *political* culture, nor did they examine policy decisions on gambling per se, but rather they were an eclectic collection of topics such as legalization of vice, illegal gambling in Great Britain and Australia, popular culture images of gambling, bingo playing and class and gender, interpretations of gambling compulsions as a disease, and regulatory models for the

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control of gambling. One essay looked specifically at political culture and gambling policy in the Netherlands, but that essay stood alone looking at the concepts that we explore here in a comparative format.

Overall, the McMillen collection of essays which individually are quite meritorious are more random treatments of questions related to gambling rather than systematic attempts to develop relationships between gambling policy and culture. On the other hand, this paper focuses attention on the concept of political culture tying it to public policy questions regarding the legalization of gambling. To the extent that we show success in this effort, we are building upon the foundations of the work set in place by McMillen and her contributing authors.

Four jurisdictions are selected for case studies. Nevada is the quintessential gambling jurisdiction in the world. For most of the past century the renegade state was America's sole jurisdiction permitting casino gambling. Juxtaposed at its border is the state of California, which stood as a beacon of moral leadership for other states. In this leadership role, California spurned the wild living of its neighbor state for most of its history. Hard core gambling was banned as anathema to the "good life," until the 1980s and 1990s. The state then embraced a lottery and opened the door wide for Native American casinos. Great Britain staunchly opposed most forms of gambling until 1960 when Parliament acquiesced to recommendations that legalization could stifle illegal gambling. The new State of Israel adopted a passive lottery without controversy, however other gambling policy was avoided until recently after a newly autonomous Palestine Authority allowed a casino to operate adjacent to the Israeli lands. The issue has been joined, but is still unresolved.

The concept of political culture was ingrained in classical works of political philosophy. However, as an explicit concept to orient understandings of politics, political culture came to the fore in the 1960s. Several writers contributed to the development of this explanatory concept (Almond and Coleman, 1960; Almond and Verba, 1963; Banfield, 1958; Clark and Wildavsky, 1990; Elazar, 1966 and 1972; Pye, 1966; Pye and Verba, 1965; Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky, 1990; Wildavsky, 1998). Of these, our initial attention will highlight ideas from Almond and Verba's five-nation study, *The Civic Culture* (1963) and Daniel Elazar's *American Federalism: A View from the States* (1966, and 1972).

Elazar emphasized differences in political cultures within the United States. He found the differences to be historical sources that explained variations in habits, perspectives, and attitudes to influence political life (Elazar, 1972). Elazar discerned three dominant cultures. These are: the (I)ndividualistic, (M)oralistic, and (T)raditionalistic.

The Individualistic (I) Culture envisions a democratic order expressed through a marketplace of issues. Government responds to demands of groups of citizens. Political participation is not encouraged, as politics is an activity reserved for professionals, not amateurs. People who seek political office do so to control the distribution of rewards of government, not to pursue any ideology. Politics is often seen as corrupt or dirty. It's like horse-trading. (Elazar, 1972, 86-89).

The Moralistic (M) political culture is sharply different. The M culture was brought to the New World by the Pilgrims and Puritans who set up religious colonies. While the I culture stresses material gain, the M culture emphasizes the commonwealth. Politics is a lofty pursuit in a search for the "good society." Politics is a quest to exercise power for the betterment of all—for the general welfare. Citizen participation is an essential ingredient. Those who serve in government assume high moral obligations and there is little tolerance for corruption (Elazar, 1972, 89-92).

The Traditionalistic political culture (T) had roots in British royalty. It persisted past Revolutionary years in the plantation South. The T culture is based upon an ambivalent

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attitude toward the marketplace coupled with an elitist conception of society. The T political culture reflects pre-commercial attitudes that accepts a largely hierarchical society. Those at the top of the social order take a dominant role in government. Like the M culture, it accepts government as a positive actor in society, but that role is defined as keeping the existing social order. "Good government" involves the maintenance of traditional patterns. Those who do not have a definitive role to play in the political system are not expected to become active in politics. (Elazar, 1972, 92-94).

Almond and Verba's (1963) *The Civic Culture* is built upon data drawn from a cross-national questionnaire administered to approximately 1000 persons each in Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Mexico, and the United States. The study focused on popular attitudes toward politics. The questions fell into three categories: (1) Cognition: did the citizen know about the political system? Was he or she knowledgeable about the persons in leadership, the processes of government, and the policies of the government? (2) Affect: how did the individual feel about the political system? Did the system have a marked impact upon their lives? and, (3) Evaluative: how did citizens evaluate the roles the citizens should play in the system? Should they participate in politics? (Almond and Verba, 1966).

The results led Almond and Verba (1963) to conceptualize three political cultures: parochial, subject, and participant. In the parochial, the individual knew nothing about the political system and expected nothing from it. Some remote African tribes would represent examples of this. In the subject culture, the individual had knowledge about the system, but felt no influence. This describes many political systems in less developed communities. In the participant culture, the individual knew about the system, and believed citizens should be able to exercise influence. The authors acknowledged that within most systems there were aspects of each culture. The United States was a participant culture, while the British system had mixed participant and subject attributes, as there were strong strains of deference to authority. Both approximated the cultural conditions conducive to the presence of the "civic culture," conditions necessary for sustaining democracy. (Friedberg, Lutrin, and Thompson, 2001).

## **Gambling in Great Britain**

Gambling policy has a long history in Britain. Class status often shaped the policy. In 1388 Richard II introduced laws banning gambling by laborers. Subsequent monarchs stopped gambling as it interfered with development of archery skills by the military. Nonetheless, in 1566, a lottery was authorized. (Jones, 1973). In 1612 one lottery was conducted to gain financial support for Virginia colony. (Thompson, 1997). During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gambling flourished as resorts such as Bath attracted play from royalty. A fear that nobility would lose property to new rich and gambling scoundrels led to the Statute of Anne in 1710 which rendered gambling debts unenforceable in courts. Gambling losses by nobility continued as did further legislative efforts to stop play. Corrupting effects of gambling peaked during the reign of George IV (early 18th Century), and following his reign, Queen Victoria presided over a complete ban of casinos and lotteries. Some betting was permitted for horse races (Miers, 1999).

The legal ban on gambling continued into the mid-point of the 20th century. Then, a Royal Commission adopted a perspective on gambling that emphasized personal liberty. There was a recognition that the wealthy could make legal bets with agents who went to horse tracks, but that the poor were betting illegally with street bookies. Gambling, per se, was not seen to have adverse social consequences. The Commission accepted the notion that gambling was a victimless crime, and as such, there was no role for government in the transactions. (Miers, 1999).

In 1960 gambling laws incorporated the new perspectives. A Street Betting Act

recognized the desire for the common man to make wagers, and merely required bookies to move their operations off the streets and into commercial buildings. Persons formerly engaged in illegal activities were now legal businessmen. The 1960 law recognized that the public wanted casino games. These were permitted for charities, if the games offered players even odds—that is, there was no “house advantage.” Unfortunately, 1960 was also the year that Cuban leader Fidel Castro closed the casinos of Havana. Many mobsters who ran casinos in Cuba examined the new policy in Great Britain, and figured they had a place they could move—London. (Miers, 1999).

The success of the betting shops was immediate; the story of the “charitable” casinos was something else. Mobsters and others quickly found loopholes, and London became a center of high stakes action. By the mid 1960s there were over 1200 casinos in England, Scotland and Wales, many engaged in dishonest practices. Parliament was prodded into action in 1968 with a new casino law that promised strict regulations. Casinos were allowed only if a licensed applicant could demonstrate that there was an existing demand for gambling activity. New casinos had to show that existing casinos are crowded; they also used police reports of illegal gambling to demonstrate a desire for more gambling outlets. The casino could only service an “unstimulated” demand for games, therefore, advertising was prohibited. Players had to be screened and admitted to membership and had to be members for 48 hours before they could gamble. These facilities could hardly market products to tourists under these rules. Indeed, if the casino was located within a hotel, the facility could be entered only by an outer door, and not by any door within the hotel. As slot machines were thought to be devices that could entice non-gamblers, the casinos were not allowed to have more than two machines. Casinos were not allowed to offer credit, and were limited in cashing checks. Casinos could not have live entertainment, and liquor was not allowed near gaming. (Miers, 1999).

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The British Government was wary about being supported in any degree by casinos; hence, there were no casino gaming taxes. Like other businesses, casinos would pay taxes on their net profits, and also pay property taxes based upon the costs of their buildings. Most casinos were established on back streets in order to minimize taxes. The rules were strictly enforced and in 1979 and 1980 three major casino companies lost their gambling licenses through activities designed to entice players away from competition. As a result of the scandal, there was a demand for even stricter rules, and Parliament adopted a gambling win tax on a sliding scale up to 33% of the win. (Miers, 1999).

The casino regulatory structure which was designed to protect the public from devious tactics remains in place today. Yet over the past 33 years, policy makers have almost silently acquiesced in the establishment of a slot machine industry that operates in arcades throughout the country, often offering gaming enticements to children.

Lotteries were closed down in the 1840s, however, a new lottery emerged in 1915—the Premium Bond lottery. This lottery was unlike others as it carried a public protection and a patriotic philosophy with it. The player does not “gamble.” Rather the player buys a bond that can be cashed in for full value at any time. However, as long as the bond is held by the player, the player participates in drawings for prizes. The bonds were promoted as a way to encourage savings. In 1993 the government succumbed to another, more pragmatic philosophy—the desire to raise revenue. A traditional lottery was reinstated. Soon the national lottery was competing with the Japanese bank lottery as the leading gambling enterprise in the world. Both Conservative Prime Minister John Major and his successor Laborite Tony Blair have praised the lottery as a wonderful means to raise money. They indicate no concern for players who were losing the funds gathered for “good causes.” (Miers, 1999, and Miers, 2001).

The Almond and Verba study (1963) concluded that Great Britain was a deferential “civic culture.” Britain has a balance of subject and participant roles. There was pride in

the system and satisfaction with governmental performance. Increased participation, which came with the expansion of suffrage, had not destroyed subject orientation. (Almond and Verba, 1963). Much has changed since the first Almond and Verba study. For example, in 1975, Prime Minister Harold Wilson felt he had to obtain the approval of the electorate in order to take Britain into the European Economic Union. For the first time, Parliament would not decide a major issue; rather it was referred to the people. In 2001, Prime Minister Blair indicated he would have a referendum on whether Britain would adopt the Euro as its basic currency.

The story of gambling in Great Britain has also been the story of policy that has been made with an eye to the public will (as in participant cultures for the work of Almond and Verba) but also a strong element of the subject notions of deference. The notions guiding the policy also rely upon ideas drawn out of the liberal and utilitarian philosophies impacting upon the polity in the nineteenth century. The people could decide when certain actions in their own lives would lead to pleasure and pain and they would pursue behaviors calculated to result in an excess of pleasure over pain. Similarly, government should not seek to substitute its judgment for that of the people unless it was clear that action was necessary to assure the greatest good for the greatest number. In the realm of gambling policy, the government has moved gingerly among postures of protectionism and patronizing the citizenry and postures of fostering liberty in personal actions, often at the same time. We see the cultural values found in Elazar's Traditional culture model as well as ideas from his Individualistic culture know as pragmatism.

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## Israel

Serious analyses of Israeli political culture have been offered in recent decades. Etzioni-Halevy and Shapira's *Political Culture in Israel* (1977) discussed cleavage and integration among Israeli Jews. In *Civil Religion in Israel* (1983) Liebman and Don-Yehiya analyzed the role of traditional religion in the establishment of the State of Israel and changes occurring in the eighties. Aranoff's *Israeli Visions and Divisions* (1989) also examined changing political culture, with particular focus on the 1970s and 1980s. In *Wither the State* (1979) Sharkansky found a commitment to a full-service state in the culture of Israel. This was based on a Biblical emphasis upon charity, as well a Zionist ideal of building a new society. Israel also sought to have a strong state to protect people who had suffered from "two millennia of statelessness." (Sharkansky, 1979; Sharkansky 1999; see also Caiden, 1970).

Zionism was a response to historical persecution and forces of assimilation. According to Rubinstein, Zionists did not want to relinquish the special marks of Judaism—language, treasures of tradition, and reverence for ancestors. Arian also viewed Zionist ideology as a cornerstone of political culture. (Rubinstein, 1997; and Arian, 1998).

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There is an inherent contradiction in Zionism which helps in understanding policy toward gambling. Aronoff suggests that the ancient myth proclaiming that the Jewish state should be a "light to the nations," was part of Zionism. He argued that given the political and military demands of sovereignty this goal was unrealistic. Moreover it invited a double standard and the criticism of other nations. The goal to be a moral vanguard contradicted another Zionist mission to be "a normal nation like all nations." Most Israeli politicians are pragmatic and can assess ideology and yet meet the demands of political reality. The population is less ideological, but still shows deference to the

ideological rhetoric of the politicians, just as it does to their policy decisions. Arian concludes that “Israel’s political culture demonstrates a fascinating mix of ideology and pragmatism.” (Arian, 1998).

Although mixed, the Israeli political culture fits well the criteria of Elazar’s (M) culture. The Biblical prophecy that “Israel shall be a light onto the nations” sets a big standard. It is widely quoted and known, but it is hardly the standard that politicians have embraced as the *modus operandi*. However, Zionism historically and in contemporary times embraced a strand of socialism with extensive welfare systems. No other nation provides as many services to new immigrants. But one important change that has occurred is a shift away from a collective ethos. There are now choices and options in university education, travel, communications, and entertainment to name a few. In a changing cultural climate, legalized gambling becomes a realistic option. (Arian, 1998).

Almond and Verba (1963) would find Israel approaching the ideal “civic culture.” Arian (1998) argues that although a personal sense of efficacy is not particularly high, there is little evidence of alienation. The participant role is highly developed and citizens are attentive to politics. While there is a system pride and self-assurance, there is also frustration with politicians and the bureaucracy. A desire for order, security and leadership persists. Public opinion can be brought to support the dominant position of the appropriate leaders when the proper symbols and appeals are used. (Arian, 1998). Thus there is a necessary deference to authority evidenced in a willingness to pay the heaviest tax burden in the world as well as a burden of military service and combat losses.

Casino gambling in Israel has been discussed since the early 1990s. Public committees, private bills in Knesset, and discussions of the Economic Committee of the Knesset, are notable. In 1990 a joint committee of the municipality of Eilat and the Israel National Lottery (*Report*, 1995) recommended the establishment of a casino and a conference center in Eilat. The casino was to be operated by the National Lottery. Income from the casino would be given to the local government. In 1991 a second committee recommended that a casino open in Eilat because the Egyptians were operating a casino in nearby Taba. (*Report*, 1995).

Two private bills to legalize casinos in Israel failed in the Knesset in 1994 and 1995. Their purpose was to stem growth of illegal gambling and to compete with casinos in nearby jurisdictions. (*Report*, 1995). The Economic Committee of the Knesset also considered the issue in 1994 and 1995, with most members making favorable comments. (*Report*, 1995).

The last proposal to legalize casino gambling was set on the agenda by a third committee—the Public Committee to Examine the Issue of a Casino in Israel. (*Report*, 1995). The failure of all the efforts to legalize casinos illustrates aspects of the culture of Israel and one way of dealing with disputes: study, debate, and non-decision.

Israel is a country with lots of gambling both legal and illegal. Kiosks located in every neighborhood sell tickets for the twice-weekly national lottery game, soccer pools, and instant lottery games. The government takes most of the revenues from the games, but player wins are not subject to income taxes. There has been a casino in Jericho just thirty minutes from Jerusalem and an hour and half from Tel Aviv, and in Taba, Egypt, minutes from Eilat. It operated from 1998 until the Intifada that began in Fall, 2000. (Friedberg, Thompson, and Lutrin, 2001). Gambling boats sail from Eilat and Haifa. The *New York Times* (July 7, 2000) had described the Jericho casino as “Israeli Patronized, and reported that it represented the largest and most lucrative investment of the Palestinian Investment Fund.” Advertisements in Israeli newspapers tout the features of the floating casinos, including their provision of Kosher food and entertainment. One company operating a casino boat offered a bond issue on the Tel Aviv stock exchange.

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Also a sizeable number of the Israelis travel abroad in order to participate in casino gambling. (Report, 1995). Illegal casinos operate in various locations and receive only cursory and occasional attention from the police. There is also anecdotal evidence that Israelis—and perhaps Jews—have more than the average inclination to gamble. An article on gambling in *The Jerusalem Report* (August 16, 1999) carried the title, “The Jewish Vice,” and a subtitle, “Gambling is the ‘drug of choice’ for the Chosen People.”

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Overall, it is estimated that Israelis spend one billion dollars a year on illegal gambling, and \$900 million on lotteries. The Jericho casino won a million dollars a day. Israelis also gamble heavily on some 700 gambling web sites that offer chances on sports events. (*New York Times*, July 14, 2000, Internet Edition).

While engaged in much gambling, Israel has nevertheless shied away from authorizing legal casinos. It is a country practiced in the arts of coping with serious problems—like the mutual but unacknowledged shared management of Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem with Palestinian Authority, or the perennial disputes between religious and secular Jews—by means of ambiguity and purposeful non-decision. (Sharkansky, 1999). The question of a casino has come on to the national agenda, most recently with the support of the Prime Minister and Finance Minister. While these position holders are at the top of the national pecking order, their support of an issue does not assure adoption. Their casino proposal languishes somewhere down on the list of national priorities.

The third committee of inquiry to consider a legal casino met in 1995. The committee surveyed the legal and illegal options facing Israeli gamblers, considered problem gambling as well as economic issues, and proposed the development of casinos with certain safeguards. The report generated controversy, most prominently from the religious community, the Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox. The issue moved higher on the political agenda three years later as a Palestinian casino, operated by Casinos Austria flourished in the city of Jericho, attracting a nightly flow of tour buses and private cars from Israeli cities. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance wondered “Why allow some of our money to flow to the Palestinians, when we might be able to funnel it to an Israeli casino, save the outflow of foreign currency, take some of the proceeds in taxes, and help the economy of a depressed region?”

Arguments about casinos are trivial in comparison with other problems. The former Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, 1999-2001, was preoccupied with negotiations with Syrians and Palestinians, as well as a contentious pullout of troops from Lebanon, as well as turmoil with religious parties about Sabbath observance and the funding of religious schools.

During the Barak administration there was a proposal for a casino in the depressed Negev desert town of Mitzpe Ramon. The first Prime Minister David Ben Gurion had established a number of settlements in the Negev. He directed tens of thousands of immigrants to them in the late 1940s and 1950s, and chose a desert site for his permanent retirement home. Four decades later, a continued poverty and chronic unemployment of the desert towns is a national embarrassment. Programs to encourage talented teachers to work there had limited success, and subsidies for industries have gone to low-skill plants that are economically marginal. The more capable youth from the region have failed to return home after the army, and have found jobs in the center of the country. Despite Labor Party sentiments in behalf of social programs, the residents of the Negev have supported the more nationalist and populist Likud, or the ethnic and religious SHAS parties.

Opposition to gambling comes from a variety of sources and reflects a moralistic political culture. Newspaper accounts report religious and secular Jewish and Arab members of Knesset who usually compete with one another on basic issues of national security and economic policy, who sit around a table and share stories about individuals led to personal disaster on account of gambling. A day after the Prime Minister and

Finance Minister proposed the casino for Mitzpe Ramon, 13 government ministers indicated their opposition and only seven supported it. The floor leader of the Prime Minister's own party said that he would cut off his right hand before raising it in support of a casino. Geographic reasons also weakened the Prime Minister's position. The Director General of the Council to develop the Galilee, in the North, asked why a casino could not be opened in his region. While the Israeli Prime Minister was proposing a casino, Palestinian authorities had promoted their Jericho casino and also tweaked religious Jews by suggesting that they would provide civil marriages in Jericho for Israelis not wanting to marry under the procedures of the official rabbinate (*Yediot Aharonot*, 1999; *Israel Television News*, 1999).

Economic profit is the principal argument used by the advocates of a casino, but the argument is not entirely one-sided. With so much gambling already available, there is a prospect of market saturation at some point. (See Thompson, 1997). While policy makers do not like to see Israelis leaving money at the Palestinian gambling tables, large numbers of Israelis do not seem to mind. This kind of "aid" to the Palestinians is less annoying than the economic "aid" involved in the many Israeli automobiles that are stolen and broken up in Palestinian fields, with their components sold to Israeli repair shops.

There is a moralistic approach to gambling that has ancient roots. The Hebrew Bible curses witches and fortune-tellers. Post-biblical compilations of law—the Mishnah, Talmud and Shulcan Aruch—prohibit games of chance, equate gambling with robbery, and include gamblers among those unqualified to testify in proceedings (Thompson, 2001). Gambling is said to attract individuals to the material and away from spiritual concerns, as well as inducing personal irresponsibility. The committee appointed to consider a casino noted these considerations, but also found that religious politicians had not mounted a campaign against established lotteries and football pools, and that they accept some of the proceeds from legalized gambling for the support of religious programs (Report, 1995). The moralistic approach could be sometimes flexible. A newspaper commentator was more outspoken in accusing religious and other opponents of hypocrisy for resisting the proposal of a casino but for not campaigning against existing legalized gambling or illegal operations (Eshet, 1999).

On the practical level, the failure to decide about a casino seems, meanwhile, to hurt no one. It is less an act that rewards political power than an evasion of action where politicians are divided, none of the advocates seem intense, and many are busy with more pressing issues. To date, officials have resolved the issue negatively, without having to make a formal decision. (Lutrin, Thompson and Friedberg, 2001; Sharkansky and Friedberg, 1998; Sharkansky and Friedberg, 2000).

## Two American States

California and Nevada began as non-indigenous societies with gold and silver strikes. Mining communities consisted of unattached males seeking to get rich quick. Gambling, alcohol, and prostitution flourished in early years of both states. However, California "changed," as mining abated and production industry, agriculture, and international trade grew. New populations came with strong families. They sought better quality lives, not just quick riches. The society began to embrace the M culture and developed into a model of the participant culture. California, in a sense, "grew up." Nevada did not. (Lutrin and Thompson, 2000).

The renegade spirit of mining days persisted in Nevada and still makes its impact on policy making. Mining opportunities waned in the 1870s and 1880s, but new populations did not come into Nevada. Instead there was a depopulation of the state. Nevada did not have good agricultural land, and the state was isolated geographically by both mountains and deserts rendering infeasible commercial enterprises such as



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manufacturing and trade. Nevada was a state and this offered political opportunities to certain interests, including California railroad magnates. Through the Nevada Legislature they controlled the election of U. S. Senators. To fight off voices suggesting that Nevada lose its political status as a state, the leaders welcomed any notion, however farfetched, that might generate economic activity. The state accepted legalized prostitution, boxing matches, sham corporation laws, and in the twentieth century easy divorce procedures. Mining experienced boom and bust periods. Whatever the state tried, the political establishment and the population defended against all critics. Nonetheless, it was not until the state endorsed wide-open casino gambling in 1931, that the state found a formula for economic growth. No American state finds itself so strongly tied to a single industry as Nevada is to gambling. As the casino industry got on its feet and began to flourish it was attacked by outside critics. (Thompson, 1997; Thompson, 2001).

Nevada has fought off critics to gambling with policies and pressures exerted by its representatives in Congress. In defense of the status quo, state leadership has not sought to be consistent to any policy except the policy of defense of gambling. Leaders have many times used "states' rights" as their rallying cry. They do so today as they seek to fight off Congressional efforts to ban betting on amateur sporting events. The state established rather strong regulatory measures for gambling in response to attacks by the federal government during and following the Kefauver hearings of the early 1950s. The state did invite federal regulation of casino gambling when in 1969 it passed the corporate gaming law. As a result the Securities and Exchange Commission has power over casino gambling. However, this was acceptable as corporations could now invest in the gambling industry. In 1988 the state supported federal regulation of Indian gambling, and in 1992 the states endorsed a federal ban on sports betting in 46 states (but not Nevada). In some cases the state promoted gambling elsewhere, but at other times it does not. In 1998, state interests invested \$26 million in a campaign seeking to limit Indian casinos in California, yet many of the same interests are now negotiating with tribes to build their casinos. In all these cases the state was advancing its basic industry. (Thompson, 2001),

While Elazar (1972) and others indicated that Nevada has an I culture, the gambling issue is played out in the climate of a T culture. Moreover, in the face of desires of political leaders that seek to protect the essential industry of the state, the general population acts much like those in a subject culture. On non-gambling issues, the same population can operate much in the participant mold. Indeed the state will readily elect conservatives or liberals, Democrats or Republicans as would voters of an I state. However, whatever the stripe of the leaders, they will always fall into line when called upon to defend the casino industry. (Thompson, 2001).

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Nevada had consistently followed the same modus operandi from its mining days through its casino predominance, however California changed. First, California changed from a state dominated by renegade miners, to a state of agriculture and industry. The M culture came to be pervasive thorough most of the twentieth century. The state produced a series of reform governors both Republicans and Democrats: Hiram Johnson, Earl Warren, Goodwin Knight, Edmund Brown and Jerry Brown. Even conservative Ronald Reagan maintained policies of his predecessors. California became a leader in education, transportation, public power production and in providing services to its people. But the services came at a price, that of high taxes. (Lutrin and Thompson, 2000).

For most of the century the state played a positive sum game in an M-participant cultural environment. Everyone won with greater services including the taxpayers. Then elements of the population perceived that they were paying too much and not receiving enough. They led a tax revolt in 1978. They were successful in limiting many taxes by referendum votes. Services were reduced drastically. Almost overnight, the state abandoned the M culture, and adopted a zero sum game more in line with the I culture. Popular majorities were also confronted with new immigrants many of whom were undocumented persons from “south of the border.” The majorities now asked if a specific program was helping them personally, while in the past leaders asked how programs could help the entire society. In the past the state population and its leaders resisted almost every effort to establish legalized gambling. But this was a new atmosphere. The moral side of the gambling equation was not significant in the face of promises that gambling revenues could provide services that otherwise would have to be cut. A lottery was endorsed by voters (even in face of the opposition of the governor and attorney general) as a way to support education. State leaders tried to control Native American gambling, but tribes successfully turned to the voters in 1998 and 2000 to win the right to have casinos offering all the games that are offered in Nevada. The casinos were seen as vehicles that could offer jobs to the unemployed, as well as new funds for the state—called contributions because the Native American casinos could not be directly taxed. The state maintains its posture as a participant culture, perhaps even more so than in the pre-1978 days, as the legislature in the face of budget crises willingly forgoes policy making responsibilities and allows power to pass to the people directly through the referendum process. (Lutrin and Thompson, 2000).

In 1994 *Time Magazine* (January 10) ran a feature story on “Las Vegas: All American City.” The story examined the renegade past of Las Vegas, but offered that the city was now rather “normal,” not because it was becoming like the rest of the nation, but rather because the rest of the nation was becoming like Las Vegas. With the endorsement of wide-open casino gambling, albeit on Native American lands, California is indeed becoming more like Nevada.

### **A Summary Note**

The scholars who enunciated the concept of political culture as a tool for political analysis left much work to be done by others. The works by Elazar (1972) and Almond and Verba (1963) must be considered seminal, however they provided only the road map, they did not take the journey. Subsequent works dealing with the political culture concept have not definitively established its value as an explanatory tool for public policy analysis in a comparative framework. In this study, we have taken a next step. By focusing upon one issue area—gambling legalization—we have used the concept in a cross-national and also a sub-national comparative analysis. Our study suggests that the scholars did identify a component for policy analysis. Our work has been qualitative, and as such it is not subject to the rigorous tests of significance that must be quantitatively oriented. We do suggest however, that we must have a good grasp of issues and history before yielding to numerical proofs in policy analysis. For a next step, however, we suggest that others take public policy questions that are common to many diverse jurisdictions, such as the gambling issue is, and weave the concept of political culture into cross-jurisdictional analyses. We envision expanding the study we started with a qualitative comparison of two states, and then two nations, to many other national settings in order to reaffirm what we believe we have found to be an efficacious analysis of gambling policy in a comparative framework.

While admittedly, we have offered an academic style discussion of the concept of political culture and its relationship to gaming phenomena, we do suggest there is

practical merit in our study for gaming industry practitioners. In the past decade entrepreneurs of gaming products have been drawn to new jurisdictions not as the result of cultural considerations, but as the result of political opportunities. Operations of casinos have been especially drawn to venues that heretofore have proscribed casino activity. The chance to gain an initial foothold in a new jurisdiction gives great opportunity for profits, as effective competition at the initial part of the product marketing cycle will be lacking.

Yet if gaming companies seize upon political chances to enter a market and they do not weigh the cultural match between the political forces in the society and gaming, they may be miscalculating long-range economic opportunities. If they operate in open defiance of local sensitivities, the result may be new restrictions on their manner of doing business including adverse taxation consequences. Gaming practitioners must realize that underlying cultural forces will surround their operations, and they should be ready to make adjustments that will assure their long run economic viability in such milieu.

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