

I welcome this opportunity to provide a testimonial to honor Bill Eadington and the conferences organized by the Institute for the Study of Gambling and Risk Taking (ISCGC). My first contact with Bill occurred in the early 1980s, when I was contemplating enrollment in a Ph.D. At the time, although gambling was widely recognized as an essential feature of Australia's popular culture, there had been very little academic research on the topic. What research did exist had focused on the psychology of problem gambling and a few rigorous, but somewhat romanticized, histories. But I wanted to analyze the dramatic shifts in Australian gambling policy, which were occurring at the time (the legalization of casinos and gaming machines in clubs and hotels, privatization of government-owned gambling enterprises). Given the scarcity of academic resources, however, my supervisors were disinclined to approve my chosen thesis topic. Then quite by accident I stumbled across a journal reference to W.E. Eadington; the title of his article seemed to be very close to my own interests. So I wrote a letter (it was long before emails and the internet) – not really expecting a reply.

But Bill did reply – and more. His letter was accompanied by copies of several journal articles and the most recent ISCGC conference proceedings. Bill's warm letter of encouragement convinced my supervisors that examination of public policy on Australian gambling was a worthwhile thesis topic after all. Years later, I was honored when Bill accepted the invitation to examine my thesis.

Since then, Bill has continued to support and encourage many Australian gambling researchers. His own research and analysis is highly regarded in the international research community. Perhaps just as significant as his academic citations is the number of times Bill has been invited to be the keynote speaker at conferences around the world. For example, during the 1980-90s, the formative years of gambling research and policy development in Australia and New Zealand, he was invited to several academic and industry conferences. More recently, Bill has turned his attention to Asian countries where he continues to offer similar leadership and guidance.

Under Bill's leadership, the ISCGC rapidly became an international resource. During the 1980s, when several countries were confronting the potential for gambling development, the Institute acquired significant national and international standing as a key centre for the dissemination of gambling research. It achieved this through successfully producing regular conferences on gambling, which have received critical acclaim from industry

representatives, academics, counselors and social welfare specialists. When researchers have needed information about gambling policy in North America, the ISCGC continues to be their first port of call.

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have exposed researchers to a range of new disciplinary perspectives as well as a network of industry, legal and public policy representatives. The conferences have a unique capacity to stimulate and facilitate international, multi-disciplinary discourse on a broad range of topics related to gambling, and continues to make an important contribution to transnational research and analysis. The pivotal role that the ISCGC has played in fostering research excellence and bringing together analysts from variety of disciplines has established its global reputation for research and scholarship on a wide-variety of gambling public policy issues.

In conclusion, I consider it a privilege to know Bill Eadington and wish to reaffirm my enthusiastic appreciation of Bill's support over several decades. While we often have arrived at different conclusions on research and policy, Bill always expresses his views with respect and good humor. More generally, gambling research and analysis are extremely well served by the successes and international reputation enjoyed by the ISCGC and the positive relationships that the Institute has successfully forged around the globe.

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