A Cultural History of Gambling

Don Feeney
Research and Planning Director
Minnesota Lottery
When we are in the tavern
We do not think how we will go to dust
But we hurry to gamble
Which always makes us sweat
What happens in the tavern, where money is host
You may well ask, and hear what I say
Some gamble, some drink, some behave loosely.
But of those who gamble, some are stripped bare,
Some win their clothes here, some are dressed in sacks
Here no one fears death,
But they throw the dice in the name of Bacchus

Carmina Burana
(~ 1300, Germany)
IT'S THAT "GO-GO" GUY AND THAT "BYE-BYE" GAL IN THE FUN CAPITAL OF THE WORLD!

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PRESENTS

ELVIS PRESLEY

ANN-MARGRET

A JACK CUMMINGS-GEORGE SIDNEY PRODUCTION

VIVA LAS VEGAS

CÉSARE DANOVA, WILLIAM DEMAREST, NICKY BLAIR, SALLY BENSON, GEORGE SIDNEY
The Camptown Races

De Camptown ladies sing dis song
Doo dah! doo dah!
De Camptown race track five miles long
Oh! De doo dah day!
De long tail filly and de big black hoss
Doo dah! doo dah!
Dey fly de track and dey both cut across
Oh! De doo dah day!
Gwine to run all night!
Gwine to run all day!
I'll bet my money on de bobtail nag
Somebody bet on de bay.
I come down dah wid my hat caved in
Doo dah! doo dah!
I go back home wid a pocket full of tin
Oh! De doo dah day!

*Stephen Foster, performed by The Duhks*
It Was a Good Day

Went to Short Dog’s house, they was watchin Yo! MTV Raps
What’s the haps on the craps
Shake em up, shake em up, shake em up, shake em
Roll em in a circle of niggaz and watch me break em
With the seven, seven-eleven, seven-eleven
Seven even back do’ little Joe
I picked up the cash flow
Then we played bones, and I’m yellin domino
Plus nobody I know got killed in South Central L.A.
Today was a good day.

- Ice Cube
River Bank

Well, I won 2 dollars on a scratch-of ticket
So I went back to the counter and I bought 2 more with it
And I won 10 bucks and that was just right
So I bought a six pack and a bag of ice
You know even if our ship came in and this is all we got
It ain’t like we really need a million dollar yacht, ‘cause

We got an inner tube
We got a trailer hitch
We’re near the river and far from rich
But we have got each other and gas in the tank
We’re laughing all the way to the river bank

- Brad Paisley
GIMME HUSH MONEY
OR I'LL TELL ON YOU

WORDS & MUSIC BY CHRIS SMITH AND HARRY BROWN

WHO'S THERE? JUST A RANDOM GUY.
This Train

This train is bound for glory, this train
This train is bound for glory, this train
This train is bound for glory
If you ride it, you must be holy
This train is bound for glory, this train

This train don’t carry no gamblers, this train.
This train don’t carry no gamblers, this train.
This train don’t carry no gamblers,
No crap shooters, no midnight ramblers,
This train don’t carry no gamblers, this train.

- Traditional,
Sit Down, You’re Rocking the Boat

I dreamed last night I got on the boat to heaven
And by some chance I had brought my dice along
And there I stood
And I hollered "Someone fade me"
But the passengers, they knew right from wrong.
For the people all said sit down, sit down, you're rockin' the boat

People all said sit down
Sit down you're rockin' the boat.
And the devil will drag you under
By the sharp lapel of your checkered coat,
Sit down, sit down, sit down, sit down,
Sit down you're rockin' the boat.

- Frank Loesser, Guys and Dolls Original Broadway Cast
Gambling on the Sabbath Day

"My gray-headed mother, now farewell; With the condemned I am to dwell. My only sister, now goodbye; In one short hour I must die."

"Oh, yonder stands my little wife, Who's prayed for me 'most all her life. And from her side I stole away And gambled on the Sabbath Day.

"Oh, wife, come lay your head right here, So I may see those falling tears. The time is up for me to die; It breaks my heart to hear you cry.

"The people, they will take my life, Take me from you, my darling wife; But there's one left for your lifetime joy, And that's our darling baby boy.

"Teach him, dear wife, what he must do: How he must love and care for you. Teach him to kneel at night and pray, And not to gamble on the Sabbath Day.

"The sheriff will cut the tender cord; My soul will go to its reward. The crowd will stand with a bowed-down head 'Til the physician cries, 'The wretch is dead.'"

His weeping mother cried aloud, "Oh, God, do save this gazing crowd, That none may never have to pay For gambling on the Sabbath Day."

Traditional, performed by J.D. Stark
Cameron vs. Ashton

It’s a battle of the sexes and they’re playing dirty.

What happens in Vegas

In Cinemas May 9
Raya Jacobs
Confessions of a Gambler
A Novel
The gambler can be a...

- Sophisticate
- Risk-taker
- Fun-seeker
- Fatalist
- Folk hero
- Cheat
- Criminal
- Low life
- Comic figure
- Fool
- Embarrassment
- Corrupter of youth
- Lacking in work ethic
- Addict
- Sinner
- Someone else