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At Odds: Gambling and Canadians, 1919-1969

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evitably brought him into contact with Theosophy.

From the perspective of an academic film historian, this is a quirky grouping, but never less than interesting and refreshing. In part they weave together through a series of connections to each other, and, as noted, to Theosophy. Eisenstein might seem out of place, for example, but he's significant in part because of the fascination he developed for Mexican mystical religious practices and also because of Sinclair's role in the tragic and senseless destruction of the Russian's Mexican film. Sinclair becomes a figure of secondary interest as a maverick outsider who unexpectedly won the 1934 Democratic Party gubernatorial primary with his End Poverty in California (EPIC) program, which might be considered a political form of utopianism, and who was then crushed in the general election by, among other factors, the implacable opposition of the Hollywood establishment and Hearst's newspapers. Hearst, besides inviting the Hollywood elite for sleepovers at San Simeon, was caricatured in Huxley's satirical novel, *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*. Huxley, so to speak squaring the circle, became friends with Jiddu Krishnamurti, who as a teenager in India was anointed by Annie Besant as a kind of messiah-figure for Theosophy, only later to renounce that role and settle in southern California.

Outside this chain of connections, Rambova's importance derives from her practice of spiritualism and her role, along with the screenwriter June Mathis, in creating the Valentino myth. "Between them they invoked a thrillingly powerful god: Eros," Brown writes. "Rudolph Valentino was unquestionably the most potent manifestation of Eros that Hollywood had ever produced. In fact, it may still be unrivalled." (74)

I have left to the end the first of the author's quintet, because her utilization of Griffith may be the most contestable part of her book. Griffith is central to her thesis because he promoted cinema — histor-

ically, of course, silent cinema, with its emphasis on visual communication rather than words — as a Universal Language that could break down barriers among peoples, promote harmony, unite the world in peace: goals Brown links to Theosophy's ideal of universal human brotherhood. Many film historians would question the book's upbeat treatment of this theme, or at least wish to see acknowledged what Miriam Hansen in her book *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, MA 1991) describes as its "complicity with the most advanced forces of expansion and monopolization," (186) that is, Hollywood's successful drive to become, not part of universal brotherhood, but the overwhelmingly dominant power in world cinema that it is today. Justine Brown does not entirely ignore what she calls the "ugly and uninspired" (152) aspects of Hollywood, but her purpose is to remind readers that there are glimmers of utopian potential in its past, which may yet be made to shine again.

Robert Sklar
New York University

Suzanne Morton, *At Odds: Gambling and Canadians, 1919-1969* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2003).

AT ODDS is a groundbreaking study of the history of gambling regulation in Canada. Suzanne Morton sets out to explain changes in attitudes toward gambling between the end of World War I and the passage of the federal government's Omnibus Bill in 1969, which permitted lotteries under certain conditions. During this period, gambling underwent a transformation from a moral vice to an acceptable activity regarded as necessary to fund the Canadian welfare state.

Morton explores the public debate about gambling in five provinces: Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia. While she is interested

in national history and tackling the "big picture," Morton is sensitive to provincial differences, particularly those of ethnicity and religion, and distinct provincial economies that affected attitudes towards gambling and hindered efforts by the federal government to amend the Criminal Code. She uses a wide variety of sources, mostly left by anti-gamblers, including those generated by governments, churches, public inquiries, and police commissions.

Part One examines the moral concerns about gambling expressed by its opponents during the first seventy years of the 20th century and considers the context of gambling activities between 1918 and 1945. Morton argues that there was a dissonance between law and behaviour and a widespread ambivalence towards gambling. A powerful segment of Anglo-Celtic Protestant middle-class policy-makers consistently opposed gambling, while at the same time private race tracks and gambling clubs for the rich and penny gambling among the working class were widespread. She suggests that uneven prosperity, the expansion of commercial leisure, the Depression, and World War II all fostered the development of environments that tolerated gambling. At times Morton's line of argument, that ambivalence rather than change characterized the Canadian view on gambling, limits the analysis. For instance, Morton notes briefly that Canada was static and ambivalent in its stance on gambling while other countries legalized gambling much earlier in the 20th century. This raises questions about the peculiarities of Canadians. Why were Canadians apparently conservative in their views on gambling, while other countries were more liberal and tolerant?

Part Two probes the ways in which gender, race, and religion structured the meaning of gambling in Canada. Morton probes the multiple constructions and responses to gambling and how competing social values were negotiated. A definition of masculine domestic respectability

that emphasized a man's role as family breadwinner was enshrined in the Criminal Code of Canada and the masculine ideal espoused by the anti-gambling movement. Gambling, however, encouraged another competing form of masculinity, one associated with bachelor sporting culture and the qualities of courage, audacity, and risk-taking. Morton draws on the research of historians who have used urban space to illuminate how heterosexual women and gay men forged gender identities. She explains how semi-public male spaces associated with gambling were used to reinforce heterosexual male privilege in Montréal. The city was selected for an in-depth case study because of its association with the evolution of male sporting culture in Canadian historical writing. Privileged men traversed Montréal's urban space without boundaries, while gambling among the working class was closely policed and targeted in the rhetoric of the anti-gambling movement.

Bingo, with its largely female working-class clientele, was an exception to the male environments associated with most forms of gambling. The anti-gambling movement saw bingo as a threat to women's responsibilities as wives and mothers and consumers. Morton argues convincingly that for many married working-class women, bingo held out the potential of consumer durables such as vacuum cleaners, which for many were unaffordable. With the expansion of the welfare state in the 1960s the anti-bingo discourse shifted from working-class women who were married with children to welfare mothers and seniors.

Morton further explores the role of ethnicity and religion in shaping opponents' understanding of gambling through case studies of Americans, Jewish Montreal, Chinese Canadians, and the role of religion in Catholic and Protestant attitudes to gambling. Previous to the emergence of commercialized gambling and American organized crime in the

1940s, the gambling problem in Canada was associated with the Chinese community, composed largely of single men. In one of the case studies, she illustrates how the association of Montréal's Eastern European Jews with bookmaking could at times fuel French-Canadian anti-Semitism. Morton also contributes to the historical writing on the political tensions between Catholic Quebec and the rest of Canada. One of the strengths of the analysis is the attention Morton gives to differences among Catholics in their views on gambling. The Catholic Church, she argues, was not unanimously in favour of bingo and other games of chance. Nevertheless charitable gambling took place at the local level despite the disapproval of Church officials. After World War II attacks on charitable bingo became a way for Anglo-Protestants to express both anti-Catholic and anti-Quebec sentiments.

Part Three of the book focuses on the post-World War II period and the move to amend the Criminal Code by linking gambling with both the welfare state and charitable fundraising. Morton argues that during this period the definition of the problem of commercial gambling underwent a change. Critics were less likely to worry about the moral consequences of gambling and instead concentrated on its impact on civic society. Morton's analysis of the gambling probes of the 1950s illustrates that by transforming the gambling problem to one associated with professional criminals, critics recast the public debate, and a distinction between criminal gambling and charitable gambling emerged. The connection between gambling and charitable fund-raising made possible the legalization of gambling in Canada in 1969. Morton is sensitive to the other issues that factored into post-war changes in views of gambling, although creation of the "compulsive gambler," and the adoption of the rhetoric of gambling as a medical problem by the anti-gambling lobby is discussed only briefly. The ascendancy of the belief that

gambling was an instinctive aspect of human nature marked a change from the premise of the progressive reformers of the early twentieth century. During the 1960s the debate about lotteries as a source of revenue for the welfare state emerged as the dominant theme. Three groups were identified as putting pressure on the federal government for legal lotteries—service clubs, municipal and provincial governments, and taxpayers. Morton suggests that a willingness to embrace new, more tolerant attitudes toward gambling and the growth of consumerism marked the end of Victorian Canada.

At Odds fills a significant gap in the Canadian literature on political institutions and state bureaucracies with its insight into policy development on moral issues. Morton's story is one that is as much about continuity as it is about change. She provides an important contribution to Canadian social history by suggesting that the moral standards of the largely English-speaking, Protestant, middle class extended beyond the 1920s, traditionally conceived by historians. As Morton's study of gambling in Canada illustrates, the final demise of Victorian Canada did not occur until the 1960s. Morton also points to the complexities and inconsistency with which moral issues were approached by policy makers and social reformers in late-19th and 20th century Canada.

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Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2002)

IN *UNEQUAL FREEDOM*, Evelyn Nakano Glenn demonstrates, deftly and often quite brilliantly, that labor relations and citizenship have been mutually reinforcing and that ideologies of race and gender

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