

Acknowledgments

THIS BOOK HAS BEEN LONG in the making. It began nearly twenty years ago as a thesis on casino design and management in Las Vegas during the meteoric expansion of the gambling industry in the early 1990s. The thesis culminated in an examination of the gambling machines that were then beginning to dominate casino floors, devices in which the industry's design and management strategies came together and reached new levels of ingenuity and precision. As a graduate student I picked up this thread, returning to the city to conduct extended dissertation research among gambling machine addicts. Finally, these two pieces coalesced—and evolved—into the present book, which explores the relationship between the technologies of the gambling industry and the experience of gambling addiction.

My deepest thanks go to the many gamblers and former gamblers in Las Vegas who shared their experiences with me, and who inspired the trajectory of my research and analysis from start to finish. The Trimeridian problem gambling clinic offered a welcoming base during my extended fieldwork in Las Vegas, and dialogues with the pioneering psychologists of gambling addiction, Richard Rosenthal, Robert Hunter, and Julian Taber, helped to guide the course of my inquiry. I thank those in the gambling industry—among them technology designers, casino slot department managers, and marketing strategists—who took the time to explain and reflect upon their design and business practices.

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Prior versions of some of the material presented in this book appeared in the following articles:

“The Touch-point Collective: Crowd Contouring on the Casino Floor.” *Limn* 2, pp. 10-13. © 2012.

“Video Poker.” In *The Inner History of Devices*, edited by Sherry Turkle. MIT Press. © 2008.

“Machines, Medication, Modulation: Circuits of Dependency and Self-Care in Las Vegas.” *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 30, pp. 1–25. © 2006.

“Digital Gambling: The Coincidence of Desire and Design.” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 597, pp. 65–81. © 2005.

