6-3-2014

Sharps, Squares, and Scalpers: Gambling in the Urban Underground

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Sharps, Squares, and Scalpers: Gambling in the Urban Underground

by

AnneMarie Cesario

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2014
This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Abstract

SHARPS, SQUARES, AND SCALPERS: GAMBLING IN THE URBAN UNDERGROUND

by

AnneMarie Cesario

Advisor: Professor William Kornblum

This study was conducted to examine the role of bookmakers in urban communities. Although bookmaking dates to 1780 in London, there has been little academic research on the bookmaker, or “bookie,” and his role in neighborhood life. Drawing on five years of ethnographic research across three U.S. cities, I sought to answer two questions: 1. What is the relationship between the bookie and the neighborhood he serves, and how is his deviant identity managed in the larger community; and 2. How is trust established and maintained among actors in illegal gambling transactions? Once established, does this strengthen social networks and enhance the cohesiveness of the neighborhood?

Through a series of qualitative case studies, this research shows how: masculinity is revered and displayed through the sports betting process; race, ethnicity, and residency dictate levels of trust among bettors and bookies; the bookie negotiates his deviant identity in both interpersonal and societal relationships; and the presence of bookmakers is ubiquitous across the United States, despite the advent of quick access and one-click internet forms of gambling. As well, quantitative and mapping analyses are undertaken to further explore gambling differentiation by type.
I examine how bookmakers persist, who their clients are, how trust is formed among them, and what, if any, role race and sex play in creating bonds of trust. Five community areas in Chicago were chosen as ethnographic locations, as were three in New York and three in Los Angeles. My research shows that, despite being an illegal enterprise in the United States (with the exception of Nevada and Delaware), bookmakers exist in almost every city across the country and cater to a diverse range of clients. Moreover, the research explores how bookies manage to persist despite major demographic changes and community gentrification. This dissertation fills a void in sociological literature by examining the role of the bookmaker in urban neighborhoods in the twenty first century. This exploration of bookies can contribute not only to our overall knowledge of deviance, but also to the theorizing of identity and trust, race, network analysis, and governance of urban space.
# Table of Contents

**Part I**  
From Rolling the Bones to Throwing Dice  

Chapter 1: Introduction: How it Works ........................................... 2  
Chapter 2: Methodology ................................................................. 24  

**Part II**  
Communities  

Chapter 3: Betting on the Community: Space at Work ..................... 56  
Chapter 4: Your Labor, Your Loss: Class at Work ............................ 82  

**Part II**  
Identity in the Den  

Chapter 5: Put Up, Man Up: The Masculine Den at Work ................ 110  
Chapter 6: How We Get Down: Trust and the Deviant at Work .......... 137  
Chapter 7: Conclusion: Gambling in Society .................................. 171  

Appendix A ......................................................................................... 198  
Appendix B: Charts & Maps .............................................................. 202  
References ......................................................................................... 265
List of Charts

Chart 1: Conversation Analysis of Masculinity 202
Chart 2: Levels of Masculinity 204
Chart 3: Bookie Identifiers 209
Chart 4: Manhood Level of Importance 210
Chart 5: Gambling Arrests by Median Household Income 211
Chart 6: Educational Attainment of Bookie Locations 212
Chart 7: Occupation Type of Bookie Locations 213
Graphs 1-5: Bookie Locations & Demographics 214
Charts A-K: Network Interconnectedness of Neighborhoods 224
Figure 1: Craigslist Ad 235
Pictures: Las Vegas 236

List of Maps

Map 1: Median Household Income & Arrests 238
Map 2: Median Household Income & Bookie Locations 239
Map 3: Police Districts & Arrests 240
Map 4: Time Frame of Arrests 241
Map 5: Arrests by Gambling Type 242
Map 6: Racial Demographics & Arrests 243
Map 7: Racial Demographics & Bookie Locations 244
Map 8: Empowerment Zones & Arrests 245
Map 9: Public v. Private Space of Arrests 246
Map 10: Majority Black Communities & Arrests 247
Map 11: Majority White Communities & Arrests 248
Map 12: Male Educational Attainment 249
Map 13: Male Educational Attainment & Racial Demographics 250
Map 14: Male Occupation Type 251
Map 15: Male Occupation Type & Racial Demographics 252
Map 16: Housing Occupancy & Arrests 253
Map 17: Housing Occupancy & Racial Demographics 254
Map 18: Racial Demographics, Arrests, & Bookie Buffers 255
Map 19: Racial Demographics of Bettors 256
Map 20: Racial Demographics & Place of Birth 257
Map 21: Bettor Locations & Industrial Corridor 258
Map 22: Gambling Arrests by Public Transportation 259
Map 23: The Cabin: Bookie & Bettor Information 260
Map 24: JP’s: Bookie & Bettor Information 261
Map 25: The Blue Horn: Bookie & Bettor Information 262
Map 26: The Chop: Bookie & Bettor Information 263
Map 27: Old-Timers: Bookie & Bettor Information 264
Part I
From Rolling the Bones to Throwing Dice
Chapter 1: Introduction: How it Works

Sal sat behind the counter eating an apple danish. Nearly every day, I stopped in to the first floor store that is just below my apartment to check in with him. The shop is a small room with three square tables, each with two chairs. A doorway leads to a back room that is used for storage. The counter where Sal sits behind almost everyday holds a cash register, a basket of assorted packaged danishes, and coffee cups.

He greets me the same way each time we met. ‘How you doing my dear?’ I always give the same trite response of ‘Everything’s fine,’ and segue into a question about bookmaking.

‘I wanted to watch the fight Saturday night, but it was on HBO and I couldn’t find a bar that was playing it,’ I said.

‘What? You shoulda just gone to the social club. They have cable.’

‘I know. But you know how the social club is. Boys club.’

‘Ehh. You go in on Saturday. You know on Saturday night the women play cards there. You know Sal? (I nod my head). Sal’s the president of the club. I been a member 40 years since I was a little boy, this big (gestures with hand). You go to Sal and he’ll bring you in. Watch the fight, whatever. You know, up until 10 years ago we didn’t allow women. No women. But now things are changing.’

‘Oh, so you give women a night to play cards?’ I ask laughing.

‘Yea, we give them a night. You know let the old ladies play their cards. But go to Sal he’ll bring you in. You know there used to be another social club right next door? Yea, you forget I grew up in the neighborhood. You know Little Lisa?’

I shake my head no.

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1 Single quotes (‘ ’) used throughout this dissertation represent a reconstruction of dialogue. Double quotes (“ ”) represent transcribed dialogue that was recorded.
'Well, you know the old guy with the baby?'

'Yes,' I say.

'Well right in that house there used to be the whole floor front to back that was a social club and then it opened up to the back which had a garden where we had a bocce ball court.'

'No kidding?'

'Oh yea. But that’s gone now. Whole neighborhood is changing.'

'So that’s the only social club left? On 3rd? I ask.

'Yea, it’s just us—we’re the only originals left. But you know it’s okay. Because you know what it is? We’re becoming more modern. We’re the small group now, but that’s okay.'

Sal receives a phone call on his cell phone from a client wanting to place a bet on the following night’s basketball game. I wave goodbye as I watch him recite a few numbers while writing nothing down. Here is a bookie in Brooklyn, working out of a cramped coffee shop, trying to hold on to a piece of his neighborhood which is rapidly changing before his eyes. There is nothing violent or threatening about this scene; if anything, it is sad to watch.

**WHO THE BOOKIE IS**

Although bookmaking dates back to 1780 in London, there has been little academic research on the bookmaker, or “bookie,” and his role in neighborhood life. A bookmaker is a person, almost exclusively male, who takes bets from individuals and either pays out or receives payment, depending on the outcome of an event. The bets, particularly in the United States, are for sporting events, and range from college basketball to professional football to Mixed Martial Arts fighting matches.

Gambling itself is an ancient form of play. Originally, priests would roll filed-down anklebones of sheep and goats for fortune telling (Schwartz 2007). From there, gambling moved
to a secular pastime. In the United States, from its inception in 1866 until the mid-twentieth century, bookmaking operations were legalized, criminalized, connected to organized crime outfits, and subject to raids during the moral panic hysteria of the Progressive Era. In the past fifty years, sociological studies of bookies and bookmaking have been almost nonexistent\(^2\) as legal betting and state lotteries flourished. Moreover, only sporadically has there been media attention regarding the prosecution of the bookmaker, most often when there is a sensational arrest of organized crime mobsters.

As bookies seem to have disappeared from the media spotlight, most Americans assume it to be an archaic crime. With the growth of legal gambling outlets such as Las Vegas and Atlantic City, horse tracks, and riverboat casinos, the bookie appears extinct in American culture except in the seediest of urban centers. This perception, however, could not be further from reality. My ethnographic research, based on five years across three cities, shows that, despite being an illegal enterprise in the United States (with the exception of Nevada and Delaware\(^3\)), bookmakers exist in almost every city across the country and cater to a diverse range of clients.

Aside from the drug trade, one can argue sports betting is the most lucrative underground, unregulated operation. While some experts estimate bookmakers gross billions of dollars per annum, my experience with the eleven bookies was different; I estimate their average gross is in the low six figures to low millions. By far, the NFL is the most lucrative sport for bookies, followed by NCAA basketball. To understand how bookmakers accrue such money, it is important to understand how sports betting actually works.

A bookmaker can best be characterized as a broker. Almost every professional sports game, from NFL to NHL to NBA, has a point spread associated with the game. The point spread

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\(^2\) There was a short period during the 1950s where sociologists took interest (see Bloch 1951; Jacoby 1950; Zola 1963).

\(^3\) Delaware is restricted in sports betting; only parlay betting on NFL games and horse wagering is legal.
is not a secret; in fact, many major publications, such as *USA Today*, publish the lines each day. The point spread, also known as ‘the line,’ shows the imbalance between two teams that are unevenly matched. Thus, by creating a line, every match has a mathematical component to it. Bookmakers expect the point spread to be accurate so they will have an (somewhat) even distribution of clients betting on both teams. Here, it is important to note the legitimacy given by the Media to illegal sports betting. When the newspaper or press publishes the line odds for a game, they, as an institution, are lending legitimacy to the practice of illegal betting.

**HOW IT WORKS**

Traditionally, the standard bet is 1.1 to 1. In other words, a bettor will pay $11 to win $10. In this standard model, a bookmaker pays a winner with the loser’s money, and keeps the ‘juice’ for himself. The juice is also known as the vigorish, or ‘vig’ for short. For an example, if a client bets $550 on a team, and another client bets $550 on the opposing team, the bookie will pay out $500 to the winning client, collects $550 from the losing client, and keeps $50 for himself. Thus, even if a gambler bets correctly 50% of the time, he will still lose; a bettor needs to correctly pick 52.4% of the winners just to break even.

There are four ways a sportsbook will specify odds: American, Fractional, Decimal, and Horse Odds. American odds are expressed using a “-” for the favorite to win and a “+” for the underdog. If a line for a team is “-150,” one must bet $150 to win $100. Likewise, if a line for a team is “+150,” you can bet $100 and potentially win $150. Fractional odds are common in European sportsbooks. Odds are expressed as a fraction amount such as “8/10.” Thus, a better would place a $10 bet which would yield a return of $8. European sportsbooks often use decimal odds such as “3.51” which would mean a bettor would receive $351 dollars if he wagered $100. Finally, horse odds are used for horse races and expressed in x to y terms, such as one risks “y”
to win “x.” The sports betting line is created by consultants (generally in Las Vegas or the Caribbean) who decide on the strength of each team playing. Another factor in determining the line is the perception by the public of the strength of a team, which ties in to local prejudices. For example, people living in New York think more highly of the Yankees than do people living in Boston; therefore, the line can vary by region. If a game has a disproportionate amount of bettors on one team, a bookie will adjust the line to make the underbet more attractive to bettors.

WHO THE PLAYERS ARE

The title of this work is a nod to different types of bettors: sharps, squares, and scalpers. Though rare, there are a handful of people known as ‘sharps’, or professional bettors, who are able to consistently choose point-spread winners. Using anything from weather to player injuries, a sharp will come up with a more accurate and valuable point spread line than the bookies and run a comparison between the two. When there is a discrepancy between the two lines, a sharp will place a bet, and thus can rake in a serious sum of money. Only once did I meet a man who could be honored with this title. Thomas was an expat from Cologne, Germany living in the South Loop area of Chicago. He owned his own company but was a sharp on the side. Though he doesn't bet with any of the bookies I worked with, he was known around betting circles.

Far more common in the betting world is the square. Simply put, a square is a novice bettor. The term comes from the notion that a bettor cannot think outside the box, or square, and thus is inexperienced in betting. Many of the bettors I worked with can be considered squares, and their movement up in the betting world depends on a variety of factors, particularly how much they put into the games.

Finally, for most people, a scalper is the least liked bettor. A scalper is someone who bets both sides of the same game at different prices, attempting to profit from the differences in odds
from book to book. The term comes from the betting term scalping, which is also known as
sports arbitrage. In truth, in today's betting market, scalping is unrealistic unless you have a
bankroll of at least $20,000. For those who bet online, it is even more unlikely one will scalp.
Since the passage of the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act (UIGEA) of 2006, online
bettors face a higher risk if they scalp, as multiple accounts can draw attention.

Sharps, squares, and scalpers comprise only a few of the types of bettors in the gambling
world, along with fleas, beards, chalk, and dog players. These nicknames take on significance in
the gambling den, and one is ascribed a status from his moniker.

THE DIVERSITY OF PLAY

As a young child, my father worked on the factory line at Zenith, and I loved hearing
stories of the bookie who would come through the factory to take bets each day. While it was a
common practice for bookmakers to work out of factories or union halls, the decline of
manufacturing in urban centers over the past three decades has changed the location from which
bookies work. Nowadays, most bookmakers work out of the neighborhood bar or social club,
while a few are more mobile and transient. Although bookmakers most frequently take sports
bets, there is a wide range of options, particularly in the United Kingdom, where one can place
bets on the sex of a baby, political elections, or when a famous couple will divorce. In 1961,
under the Betting and Gaming Act, the United Kingdom legalized sports betting. As such, the
legalization of betting allows for many more options to bet without the fear of criminalization.
Founded in 1886, Ladbrokes is the largest company to provide such a service with annual
revenue of 1.86 billion dollars in 2012. The company owns approximately 2,400 betting shops
across the UK and Ireland, as well as numerous online gambling websites. Because gambling is

4 While I do not address the UK betting system in this dissertation, I did spend three months in London examining
sports bettors. I did not feel enough time was spent to tackle comparatives between the countries, but it did help my
overall understanding of the betting world.
legal in the UK, there is far more freedom to diversify betting options and not stick to only sports. Betting shops and the act of betting is legitimized through law. Companies like Ladbrokes are able to create lines on almost anything that one could think to bet on without fear of judicial harm. Thus, as a for-profit company, they create as many betting options to entice as many persons as possible.

In the U.S., all of the bookies I spoke with, while aware of non-sports betting options, had no interest in taking on the task. The main reason bookies gave was their clientele seemed to have no interest. This is an important point, as I learned there were clear differences among those who bet online versus those who bet with a bookie. I further expand on this later in the dissertation.

VIRTUAL PLAY: SPORTS BETTING ONLINE VS. IN FACE

With the advent of quick-access and one-click Internet forms of gambling, particularly in the past ten years, the question arises as to why the bookie retains a position (and an occupation) in the neighborhood. No longer affiliated with the mafia or other large-scale crime outfits, it remains even more curious as to why and how the bookmaker is (albeit illegally) able to conduct business. Moreover, this dissertation examines not only the motivations of the bookie, but of the clients as to why they choose to take on this action. The Mafia’s decline from bookmaking was largely due to broader changes within the organizational structure. Though some bookies are still affiliated with the Mafia, it is at best a loose connection and historic at that. The Mafia of the first half of the twentieth century does not exist in most cities; traditionally-run Mafia families changed significantly in the 1970s and '80s. No longer is the Mafia a singular ethnic domain; various Eastern Europeans have taken over, and the market transformed as well. The distribution of drugs and the sex trade expanded, which was minimal in the days of the early Mafia. As well,
the slowdown of Italian immigration, coupled with second and third generations moving up and out of ethnic urban enclaves, created fractions between generations. Finally, the government’s crackdown on heads of Mafia families played a major role in the disappearance of the Mafia in bookmaking. As more people were tried in court and imprisoned, the less structurally sound those families became.

Also of interest is how the bookie manages his business in the neighborhood as the community undergoes gentrification or changes in demographics. The community areas explored in this research have undergone significant demographic shifts in the past thirty years, notably in economic status and racial-ethnic composition. Thus, this research inquires how the bookmaker handles such changes, particularly in terms of retaining clientele. That is, I explore if there were new clients, if there were certain “types” of people the bookie would not conduct business with, and, if new clients must prove their trustworthiness, how that process takes place. In fact, in six of the bookie locations, the bookmakers act as a stabilizing force in their communities that have undergone dramatic socio-economic changes.

In seeking to fill a void in sociological literature, it is imperative to comprehend how the bookmaker negotiates his identity and criminal occupation within his social network. Gambling in the United States is estimated to be a $400 billion a year industry showing no signs of a recession. Various gambling legislation, on both a national and state level, has been adopted in the past decade. Thus, the bookie on a neighborhood level is placed in the context of larger macro-political and economic changes in the United States. This exploration of bookies contributes not only to our overall knowledge of trust formation, but also to the theorizing of deviance and identity, symbolic exchange, and governance of space.

**RISKING TRUST IN THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY**
In order to understand how a bookie operates within a criminal framework, it is necessary to examine myriad social bonds of trust that must be maintained. Within the past three decades, the concept of trust in sociology has gained considerable attention. Sociologists such as Luhmann (1979) and Barber (1983) have placed trust at the core of theorizing social cohesion in contemporary society. Others have contributed to the literature by viewing the primary function of trust as sociological, as well as the basis on which trust rests as primarily social (Lewis and Weigert 1985; Garfinkel 1963; Goffman 1959). Thus, analyses of how trust in persons and institutions is established, maintained, and restored is of critical importance. However, an exploration of trust through illegal economic exchange and social bond has produced scant research. Given that bookmaking is illegal, and all actors involved are engaged in criminal activity, bookies are in some sense an ideal group to study in criminology.

Despite (and in fact because of) its illegality, bookmaking is an occupation which relies heavily on reciprocal trust; not only between the bookie and bettor, but between the bookie and other participants in the neighborhood. The bookmaker, because his occupation is hidden from many in the community, can be seen as possessing a dual identity: that of a resident neighbor and that of a criminal who functions in the illegal underground economy. As gambling laws have never been static (on a national, state, or city level), it is important to understand how and why legislation has affected the local bookmaker. Moreover, changes in urban design and policy in recent decades have not only affected the bookie, but other forms of gambling as well, such as horse races (Off Track Betting), Keno, slot machines, and lotteries.

In a pure economic exchange, the transaction rests on a formal contract that stipulates the exact quantities to be exchanged. Although there is a predetermined amount of money when one places a bet, the exchange between bettor and bookie cannot be viewed as a strict economic
exchange; there is no written contract, no protection by law, and only a verbal agreement that either party can refute if desired. Placing an illegal bet thus requires trust from both parties: that the bettor will pay his figure and the bookie will pay out what is owed. Thus, the relationship forged between bookmaker and bettor is not strictly economic and in fact possesses a social characteristic. Indeed, as Simmel ([1900] 2004, p. 379) argued, there is a ‘mutual faithfulness’ on which all social relationships depend. Most analyses of trust support the belief that actors try to establish their trustworthiness through a type of social exchange, known as symbolic exchange, whereby the importance of exchange lies not in the good’s utilitarian value, but rather in its significance that communicates the intentions of the actors.

As Hill (1990, p.505), among others, has argued, ‘reputation has an economic value’; it determines the willingness of others to enter into an exchange with an actor. A bookie knows his reputation (and thus his trustworthiness) rests primarily on his ability to pay out in a timely manner. Trust is necessary in such an exchange because there is no basis for confidence (Seligman, 98). Moreover, as Hirsch (1978) notes, trust is important for exchange because it is ‘a public good, necessary for the success of economic transactions.’

Social exchanges are possible because actors orient their actions toward a norm of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960; Simmel 1950). Further, trust builds up incrementally through a series of gradually increasing investments in the relationship (Blau 1964, p.98). Thus, a bettor is only seen as trustworthy by the bookie after numerous positive exchanges have taken place; this was confirmed in my field research. However, as is expanded upon in Chapter Six, positive transactions do not guarantee a bookie will find a client trustworthy, basing part of his belief on a ‘feeling.’ This feeling is, in part, frequently based on the race of the client. Not only do bookies hierarchize trust by race, they also do so by ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and locale.
The relationship based on trust extends beyond the bettor and bookie. A reciprocal relationship of trust also exists between the bookie and the owner of the location from which he works. Additionally, as a sizable portion of the bookie’s clientele is policemen, the bookmaker also engages in a trust-based relationship with the police: that the policeman will not arrest the bookie and that the bookie will not rat out a ‘dirty cop.’ From social exchange, stable relationships emerge (Ekeh 1974). In the above exchanges, actors orient themselves not to the purchase of specific goods, but to the construction and maintenance of relationships.

Recently, the issues and social dimensions of trust and credibility have been raised in sociological studies of risk. Decades before social theorists recognized the importance of voluntary risk-taking in late modernity, Goffman (1967) anticipated the growing attraction of risk taking or ‘action.’ In his undervalued essay “Where The Action Is,” Goffman argued recreational activities such as gambling become important for creating a ‘full’ self and in defining one’s strength of character. Yet, Goffman was also aware that certain ‘action sites’ (such as the casino) had become commercialized whereby the consequences of action were more manageable. As Cosgrave points out, gambling in its legal form is a type of consumption whereby pleasure, desire, and leisure take on significance for the actor (Cosgrave 2008). Drawing from this concept, we can differentiate manageable action (legally gambling at a casino) from action that still possesses risk (placing illegal bets with a bookie). This may help to understand gender dynamics that exist among various forms of gambling. For example, women are much more likely to gamble on slot machines at casinos (and indeed have become a desirable demographic), yet very rarely do they place bets with bookmakers. In fact, throughout my five years of research, I observed only two females place bets with any of the eleven bookies.
On the other hand, at the casinos I frequented in Atlantic City, Las Vegas, and the Chicagoland area, females comprise a large percentage of the clientele. Even more, there are further distinctions among what types of gambling females engage in, such as slot machines (games of chance) over table games (games of skill). Currently, the dominant discourse of risk in sociological research takes into consideration the slow crisis of modernity and industrial society. As Lyng (2005) argues, the economic imperative of hyperconsumption, in conjunction with social and demographic changes, has contributed to the emergence of a risk-taking ethic in the United States. Following the work of Giddens (2000) on the ‘risk society,’ I argue the skills, competencies, and symbolic resources derived from illegal gambling have been in demand by risk societies evolving in the past two hundred years.

**CONSUMING PLAY, ACHIEVING MANHOOD**

Building on Ritzer’s (1999) work on re-enchantment through ‘cathedrals of consumption,’ I argue one distinct feature of contemporary risk-taking is the expansion of risk opportunities within the realm of leisure consumption, such as gambling. However, while Ritzer’s ‘cathedrals’ may be applied to gambling locations such as Las Vegas, it does not help us understand why bookmakers or Off Track Betting sites (the antithesis of a cathedral of consumption) persist today. In striking contrast to consumption sites such as Las Vegas, one of Ritzer’s main examples, the bookmaker offers no credit cards, advertising, or fantasy design of space. Yet, people continue to consume in great numbers. Moreover, in a throwback to Durkheim’s insight on deviance, many crimes of the modern era can be viewed as the unavoidable flip side of a rationalized culture that produces incredible disparities of wealth and poverty, power and powerlessness. This too can be applied to show how various forms of gambling attain a legal or illegal status.
Thorstein Veblen’s seminal work *The Theory of the Leisure Class* identified two main ways in which individuals display wealth: through extensive leisure activities and through lavish expenditure on consumption and services (Veblen [1899] 1994). Drawing from this concept, I explore how and why there are socially constructed differences between a high-roller in Las Vegas who spends $100,000 on a single poker game and a client of a bookie who is deemed ‘pathological’ when he places an exorbitant sum on a single game.

The link between Veblen and the more contemporary Pierre Bourdieu has been shown in previous literature (Tiggs 2001; Campbell 1995). In *Distinction*, Bourdieu tackles consumption via the creation of class distinctions, which he argued are not created via the use values but via their symbolic properties of goods. Thus, the material economy is increasingly driven by the cultural economy in the field of consumption (1984). Pulling from Bourdieu and his classifications of lifestyles, I analyze how specific forms of gambling are perceived by the various economic classes to make distinctions between ‘acceptable’ and ‘unacceptable’ forms of gambling.

In recent years, a trend has emerged which has placed gambling under the new term of ‘gaming,’ with an emphasis on entertainment and technology. In the 1990s, construction in Las Vegas boomed and became one of the fastest growing cities in the nation. As older, run-down hotels were razed, the city reinvented itself as an entertainment capital. Las Vegas was no longer just for gamblers: it was for foodies, shoppers, kids, car enthusiasts, and those looking to sin. At the same time Vegas was seeing an unprecedented growth in population and tourism, other cities began to redefine the gambling experience. No more was gambling the ‘nation’s evil’ as it had been decried during the Progressive Era (Rowntree 1905). The social hygiene movement geared towards regulating such a vice was no longer necessary, as gambling became a legitimized form

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of entertainment. Instead, gambling (and those who engage in illegitimate forms of it) is now being regulated through space.

**A CRIMINAL IN THE COMMUNITY?**

From the time sociologist Ruth Glass coined the term ‘gentrification’ in 1964 to characterize the movement of middle-class people into low-income areas of London, the word has invoked passionate debates (Glass 1964). Initial sociological research on gentrification centered on the extent of these new patterns and speculation of the consequences of displacement. Today, on both a theoretical and empirical level, there is a lack of understanding of gentrifying neighborhoods, with a focus on the negative, one-dimensional connotation of gentrification. What was discovered in my research is that the neighborhood institution of gambling is not limited to a single socioeconomic class. Even more, in communities where gentrification has occurred, gambling with a bookie offers men of different classes a space to socialize and interact. Further, displays of masculinity appear to minimize class distinctions among bettors. Investigating how this institution serves to neutralize or modify class differences can advance the sociological knowledge of gentrification in communities.

The ‘fear of crime’ in communities has become a focal point for numerous political and policy debates, and ‘neighborhood safety’ became a key political issue in cities across the country in recent decades. In the most basic of terms, a bookmaker is a criminal, and he conducts illegal activity in a local neighborhood, most often the one in which he is a resident. How, then, does he manage his identity so as not to become an ostracized or undesirable member of the community?

Walkate’s research has supported the notion that the relation people have with the perception or fear of crime is mediated by the relevance of their relationship to the community,
as well as their structural position within the community (Walkate 1998, p.567). However, she does not address whether the criminal’s position or relationship to the community mediates residents’ perception of crime. Of the eleven bookies studied, nine still live in the community they were born and raised. Even more, one is the vice-president of the neighborhood social club, another has strong connections to the Sanitation Department (and thus union jobs), and another is a well-respected member of the neighborhood church. The men are public characters in their respective neighborhoods. Their stigma as a criminal is successfully concealed, or what Goffman labeled *passing*, from the larger community (Goffman 1963). To those in his social network where he is discreditable, it is for most a criminal identity that is secondary to the more valued social status the bookie possesses; that is, it is a situational deviance (Falk 2001). Moreover, because many of the residents are also engaged in a stigmatized behavior of gambling, there is little chance of the bookie attaining a ‘spoiled identity.’

A second argument why the community does not criminalize the bookie is that his activities are perceived as a victimless crime. Media images of bookmakers ‘breaking legs’ are far from realistic. From my research, it is not in the neighborhood bookie’s best interest to commit violence against a client who will not pay because the bookie stands to lose his position as a respectable and decent member of the community. Bookmaking can also be viewed as a victimless crime because it involves only actors who choose to engage in illegal activity; no other members of the neighborhood are forced to play a line with the bookie. That said, as further discussed, gambling does have an affect on a micro, familial level.

Jack Katz’s work on the seduction of crimes is of considerable value when analyzing motivation for bookies and bettors (Katz 1988). A body of literature on criminal resistance and transcendence has been prompted by Katz’s analysis of applying a phenomenological
perspective to the study of criminal action. He focused on the experiential ‘foreground’ of crime, where criminals are embedded in the sensual immediacy of the criminal act. In contrast to earlier criminological theories, Katz posits the attractions of crime have more to do with the rewards of the experience itself. Thus, in recognizing the seductive qualities of illegal gambling, I apply this criminological theory to understanding why bookmakers and their clients engage in risky behavior that does not, on the whole, produce great monetary gains for either party.

**GEOGRAPHY OF SPACE & PLACE**

In his study of the prison, Foucault argued the modern penal system is structured around the process of retraining the soul rather than corporal punishment (Foucault 1979). More recently, scholars have advanced this theory by focusing on another regime of governance: control through the management of space. During the 1970s, the focus on catching offenders expanded to removing ‘incivilities’ in public spaces (Wilson and Kelling 1982). This decision implied creating spaces that appeared safe to city dwellers by removing activities that revealed social disorder or people who looked dangerous. During this period in New York City, Off Track Betting (OTB) locations were opened in a strategic move to wipe out bookmakers. Across the nation, and New York in particular, bookmakers were historically associated with organized crime. The decision to regulate legal gambling through OTB sites can also be viewed as a decision to regulate social disorder by confining gambling to strategically placed (and government-controlled) spaces.

New forms of spatially organized crime control now characterize contemporary cities, with examples ranging from gated communities (Caldeira 1999) to prostitution-free zones (Perry and Sanchez 1998; Bernstein 2010). The above examples show how regulatory mechanisms target space rather than persons. Rather than attempting to correct offenders, they exclude
offensive behavior (Merry 2001). Thus, the focus of enforcing moral norms has been replaced by managing risks (Ericson and Haggerty 1997). This can be applied to gambling, and how police and other authorities target certain persons and forms of gambling, as shown in Chapter 2.

**METHODOLOGY**

There were two main objectives of my fieldwork. The first was to gain an understanding of the lives of bookmakers in the three chosen cities of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. The second was to examine broader structural changes that have affected the bookmaker in specific and gambling in general. Discussing one without the other is incomplete and would provide only a fragmented understanding of bookmakers. Therefore, I chose to use a mixed methodology of both qualitative and quantitative analyses.

In order to best understand the relationship between the bookie and the neighborhood, an ethnographic approach was undertaken. Since bookmaking is illegal and bookies do not advertise openly, I relied on informal means and snowballing to gain access to bookies. Having grown up in an environment where bookmaking was an integral part of neighborhood life, I have cultivated a familiarity and awareness of bookies over the past two decades. Through friendships I have withbettors, ads placed on craigslist, inquiries made at neighborhood bars, and talking with everyone from my dentist to a bus driver, I was given 39 leads to bookies in three cities; of these, only ten proved fruitful. Those who chose not to participate gave two specific reasons: not wanting attention drawn to himself and not wanting to waste time with someone who would not bring in money. Additionally, I spent time and interacted with patrons at local off-track betting sites (OTBs) that led to an introduction to one other bookie. In total, I worked with 11 bookies who served three neighborhoods in New York, five in Chicago, and three in Los Angeles.
A total of five years was spent conducting in-depth interviews and participant observation. I found this necessary to sufficiently explore all facets. Thirty-three (non-consecutive) months were spent in Chicago, ten months in New York, and sixteen (non-consecutive) months in Los Angeles. In addition, approximately eighty-three clients of the eleven bookies were interviewed in order to examine not only reason for gambling illegally, but more importantly, perceptions of the bookie from his neighborhood.

While my goal was to record all interviews and observation periods, only two interviews and no observation periods were recorded. This was due to the research subjects’ refusal to be recorded. Therefore, copious handwritten notes were taken throughout the five years.

To study the bookie without studying the broader culture of gambling would provide simplistic and limited research. Thus, a historical examination of gambling in the United States was conducted to include media representations, legislation, arrest rates, and funding.

Although this dissertation’s research encompasses three cities, the primary focus was the city of Chicago. Using mapping technology, I analyzed Chicago gambling arrest rates from May 2007 to June 2010. This methodology was used to examine where and what type of gambling arrests take place across the city. As further expanded upon in Chapter 2, I argue spatial governmentality reigns and disenfranchises groups, specifically minorities and the economically disadvantaged. Contributions to research on gentrification and community cohesion are further investigated through the exploration of gambling arrest rates in Chicago.

While not the focus of this research, the connections I made at the OTB I consider vital for the purposes of comparison to the bookies and his clients. Even though OTBs only place bets for horse races, I still wanted to examine the impact this establishment (and, on a larger scale, other technological advances in betting) had on the bookie’s profits. That is, since OTBs opened
in 1970 in New York City and Chicago, have bookies seen a decline in clients? Do they still place bets for horse races? Has the physical space and presence of OTBs in a neighborhood affected the bookie’s work? Second only to baseball, horse racing is the second most widely attended spectator sport in the United States.6

The history of horse racing in the United States dates back to before the Civil War. During this time, attending the races and wagering on the outcome was primarily an upper class activity. Post Civil War, however, tracks across the Eastern coast opened up, allowing a more diverse population to attend the races.

Betting on horse races has its roots in what was known as auction pools. Bookmakers would auction off bets for each horse in a particular race. Once a horse was taken (bet on), no one else could bet on it. Thus, the auction pool didn’t last long, as bettors had limited choices in the race. However, the demand to bet on horses was noticed by the bookmakers, and they soon came up with a wagering system familiar to us today: a bookmaker would set odds on an individual horse, thus increasing the betting handle and the bookie’s hold. When one horse had a particularly high number of wages on it, the bookie would lower the odds in order to make other horses more appealing in the race.

There were over 300 racetracks by 1920 in the United States, coupled with thousands of pool halls and off-track betting sites. These halls used telegraph wires to connect to the racetrack, which allowed for an individual to place a bet on any race across the country, regardless of his location. The time I spent at off-track betting sites was valuable in understanding gambling terminology and practice. However, after time spent at five locations and reviewing notes, it was clear this was a separate undertaking, distinct from gambling dens with bookies.

Aside from OTBs, I was curious to see what other advances in technology have affected the bookie. Specifically, I examine the role of the Internet and online betting. Despite questions being raised on the legality of online gambling, and some states strictly prohibiting online gambling of any kind, there have been various loopholes that companies have used to sidestep United States law. Most recognizable is when sportbooks (a company that accepts bets) are located in foreign countries and have an offshore address, thus excluding them from U.S. law.

I found it necessary to explore the Internet gaming phenomenon that has taken hold in the past decade. The Internet gambling business is one of the fastest growing businesses across the world. In 2010, the global Internet gambling revenue was approximately $30 billion across 2,679 sites. The exploration of various online betting sites provided an analysis of the corporatization and virtualization of illegal gambling.

There is no question that the Internet has made gambling easier—accessibility, invisibility, anonymity, and speed. Thus, two questions must be raised. First, has technology (and specifically the Internet) led to a decline of bookies? Has the bookie’s client base declined because of this? Does the Internet cater to the same clientele as the bookie? Second, and perhaps more importantly, we must ask: what function does the bookie serve in an urban community? What is his role, and is his role a deviant one? Does he provide for the neighborhood in ways outside of placing bets? If neighborhood bookies are nearing extinction, what affect will this have on the larger community, if any?

The United States Wire Act of 1961 prohibits gambling over the “wires.” Both the current administration and Department of Justice have argued the Wire Act applies to Internet gambling. However, in 2004, the World Trade Organization refuted this understanding of the Act.

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and claimed it was in violation of the WTO commercial services accord. Since then, numerous cases have come before the courts with no consistent ruling.

On April 15, 2011, eleven individuals were indicted by the Department of Justice for their affiliation with three Internet poker operation sites. The following month, ten gambling sites were shut down for being found in violation of accepting bets from US citizens. In the past two years, Congress introduced eight bills that pertain to Internet gaming. Yet, there seems to be a movement towards deregulation. With the increasing availability of Internet gaming options, the arguments for and against legality become more consequential. Not only can one bet on sports online, but also one can play poker, casino games, lotteries, and bingo. Of interest for this dissertation is why the neighborhood bookie remains a physical figure in the community when virtual sports betting is ubiquitous, effortless, and can be done in the privacy of one’s home.

CONCLUSION

The bookie has an historical place in US history. That said, he is not sealed in the history books just yet; rather, he continues to exist across locales both in the United States and internationally. The research for this dissertation provides myriad contributions to sociology, particularly in the fields of community studies, criminology, network analysis, and masculinity. From a theoretical perspective, this research can advance knowledge on voluntary risk-taking, trust, and identity management. Further, the analysis can contribute to our understanding of how structural and demographic changes have transformed bookmaking and gambling.

Although I did not initially set out to examine the sociology of masculinity, this dissertation explores gender throughout each section. The gambling dens where I conducted my ethnographic research can very well be called masculine dens. Sex and gender pulse through and inform sports bettors and their identity at every turn.
The ultimate significance of this dissertation lies in its potential to understand the
bookie’s role in the neighborhood in the twenty first century amidst mass technological
advances, structural-political changes relating to gambling, and new forms of governing crime.
While there are scholars of gambling (Reith 2002; Bernhard 1998; Aasved 2003) who have
examined gambling from a sociological perspective, much of the literature has come from the
field of psychology, primarily in relation to problem and pathological gambling. Indeed, even
within the field of sociology, the focus has been on risk-taking, excess gamblers, and social costs
of gambling. In fact, there is to date no in-depth sociological study of the bookmaker and his
relationship to the neighborhood. This ethnography hopes to rectify the gaping hole.

I feel it is important to proclaim this from the outset: there was nothing glamorous, starry-eyed,
or exciting about the work I conducted. While I found the research to be stimulating and
incredibly valuable in understanding communities and space, the actual practice was quite
mundane. Media images, film, and television do a remarkably poor job of showing the reality of
a gambling den. That is, the dramatization of bookies is an understatement. This does not make
the space, the practice, or the men who are a part of it any less important; it is simply to say there
is a marked difference between the real and the imagined.
Chapter 2: Methodology

The Characters:

Sal: Park Slope—9 bettors
Jimmy: Bay Ridge—7 bettors
Pete: Chinatown—2 bettors
Johnny: Montclare—26 bettors
Freddie: New City—22 bettors
Lucas: Jefferson Park—32 bettors
Frank: West Town—20 bettors
Oscar: Lincoln Square—27 bettors
Vinny: North Hollywood—8 bettors
Paul: Koreatown—8 bettors
Amado: Echo Park—3 bettors

HOW RESEARCH WAS COLLECTED

Though this dissertation is primarily ethnographic in methodology, a valuable piece of this research comes from cartographic analysis. While in Chicago, I began to notice a major discord between who was being arrested and who I encountered gambling. I undertook the study of geographic information systems (GIS) to better understand what I saw in my ethnographic work.\textsuperscript{8} GIS offers a visual representation of the data, particularly the arrests I heard of and witnessed.

I requested Chicago Police arrest data for a three-year period beginning May 2007. The only data I wanted to access was gambling arrests in the city of Chicago. While it seemed an innocuous request, it was clear the Department was not interested in relinquishing said data. Ultimately, I was given the data, though it took over a year, 50-plus emails, and numerous in-person exchanges. I was given all raw data, which I input into an Excel file and converted to a shapefile suitable for mapping. Additionally, I used the 2010 Decennial Census data available

\textsuperscript{8} I completed a certification in Geographic Information Systems in 2011.
from the U.S. Census Bureau to create maps that examined a variety of variables. Although it was laborious, I maintain every sociologist can benefit from learning geographic information systems and incorporating it into their work.

I could not explain my dissertation to anyone who asked without having them say to me, ‘oh I know my lawyer has a bookie,’ ‘my nephew uses a bookie,’ ‘the bar I went to used to have a bookie.’ It was evident just from conversations with acquaintances the pervasiveness of bookies and gambling. I couldn’t get out more than two sentences without someone interrupting me to tell me their story.

My ethnographic methodology proved difficult at times, unbearable at others. I began my research in New York City in 2007. After a year of collected research, my apartment was broken into, and my research (and thus expensive laptop) disappeared with the burglary. I was deflated, particularly since it was my first foray into ethnographic research. The first six months had been spent tracking down leads of bookies, and I shuddered at the idea of having to tell my bookies all the notes and information I had on them was stolen. I was fortunate in that all three bookies continued to speak with me after the incident. I left three months after the break-in for Chicago, and it was there I settled for the next few years to conduct further research. Though I cannot speak with any certainty, I do not believe the break-in was related to my research. I had received a ride home a couple of times from one of the clients from Park Slope, so he did know where I lived. That said, there was no need for anyone to break in and take my research. The bookies all chose to work with me, and certainly had enough power and autonomy to end the work at the time of their choosing. As for the clients, only those who agreed to participate did so, and therefore I cannot imagine someone taking such extreme actions against me. As well, when I informed my bookies what had happened, all three were sympathetic and offered to help me.
One said he could bring a guy over to secure my windows; another said he could put the word out to pawn shops and other businesses to see if my belongings showed up.

I thought Chicago a good site for analysis for a number of reasons. To begin, I was born and raised there and thus had many connections of which I could reach out. Second, Chicago has a long, storied history of a Mafia presence, including illegal activities such as wire-tapping and bookmaking. Finally, Chicago is the third most populous city in the country and is equally diverse in race, ethnicities, and economics; there is a reason sociologists have studied this city for almost a century. Aside from brief stints overseas, I remained in Chicago for three years to conduct research. The ties I developed, the interactions I had, and the situations I was involved in, all proved essential to properly examine my research questions.

Upon leaving Chicago, I traveled to Los Angeles where I spent an initial six months attempting to conduct ethnographic research. This proved difficult for countless reasons, most notably my lack of proper transportation. I didn’t own a car (indeed I never had), and spent my life relying on public transportation with little headache. In Los Angeles, however, it was clear after one week how necessary it was for me to drive. I was located in Sherman Oaks and would have to go to Chinatown for a meeting that would take two hours one way. I could not stay anywhere past 10 or 10:30 to ensure I could catch the last bus of the night. If one of my contacts bailed on an interview, I lost hours of time traveling to and from the meet-up location. I was incredibly frustrated by the sprawl of the city, and I remained car-free for six months. I was lucky to meet people and rely on their generosity for a lift to a location. Despite this aggravation, Los Angeles was a fascinating city to study, particularly because of how different it was from Chicago and New York.
The second day I arrived in LA, I met someone who worked on the World Poker Tour. He regaled me with stories of the men landing and immediately placing bets on anything they could think of—disgusting food types, sports, and likelihood of getting laid that night. Within a week, I had three different people tell me bars and clubs where bookies worked. I could tell, however, that things ran differently in Los Angeles. At the Jimmy Kimmel show, I spoke with a producer who explained there are a number of people at work that bet constantly on sports games; he showed me a huge board upstairs that was a gambling pool the workers were a part of.

Interestingly, every time one mentioned something about knowledge of a bookie, his or her voice dropped to an almost whisper, as if to comment on its illicit nature. Chicago and New York were infinitely easier to wedge out bookies, perhaps because of the historic nature, the geographic composition, or my stronger knowledge of each city. I suspect much of it was the ease of walking to bars, the fluidity of moving to another, and the amount of physical contact with persons due to public transportation.

Like other western cities in the United States, Los Angeles is a satellite city, defined by massive sprawl, an automobile culture, and unclear neighborhood boundaries. Unlike Chicago’s 77 community areas that have remained stable over the past century (for the most part), Los Angeles neighborhoods are constantly changing or being redefined. On numerous occasions during my research, I would ask the subject where he lived. He would respond with a neighborhood name and the cross-streets of his address. When I went home to map the address, it was in a different neighborhood than what he claimed. This wasn’t because the participant was purposefully lying to me; he genuinely believed he lived in that particular neighborhood.

Another major difference I saw in Los Angeles was the transience of residents. One year they lived in Hollywood, the next in Silver Lake, the next in Culver City. The ties to a particular
neighborhood were much more anemic than I saw in New York or Chicago. Of course, part of this is due to the fact that most residents weren’t born in Los Angeles. There is a joke I heard often while living there: Nobody is actually from LA. This seemed true, especially as it pertained to my research subjects. Only 3 were from the city of Los Angeles or Los Angeles County.

Additionally, because there were weak ties to a particular community compounded with the fact that Los Angeles is a spread out and car-centric city, the majority of people did not go out in the same neighborhood they lived in. For example, it wasn’t unusual to live in Eagle Rock but go to a bar in Echo Park. Not only were bars and clubs not frequented in the same neighborhood, but nail salons, barbers, dry cleaners, and other third spaces weren’t. Since the majority of people have a car or access to a car, it didn’t seem ridiculous to travel to the neighboring community to tailor a pair of pants. It was much more about the best rather than the closest. Part of why this is so fascinating is because rarely do you find a bar that has consistent patrons. Only once did I meet a man who frequented the same bar for more than ten years. In New York or Chicago, however, it is a common occurrence. There is nothing unusual about having “regulars” at such places.

Thus, I felt I was rounded with these three locations. New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles are the three most populous cities in the country that provide an array of demographics, diversity, and spatial analysis. Each city was a different playground for which to conduct research and provide a well-balanced view of urban life in America.

The research was collected in various ways. In New York, my friend’s father was a bettor who lived in Dyker Heights (the neighboring community to Bay Ridge). He introduced me to Jimmy—his bookie in Bay Ridge. When I briefly lived in Park Slope, it was on the second floor of a three-flat apartment building. The first floor was a small coffee shop with a few tables. They
only sold decaf or regular coffee and some packaged danishes. My roommate at the time knew the owner’s nephew, Sal, and introduced the two of us. He was a bookie at the social club around the corner from where I lived. A friend of a friend moved into his cousin’s apartment in what was once Little Italy but now is more or less Chinatown. His landlord, in addition to charging exorbitant rent, was part owner of a small betting shop tucked away in Chinatown. My friend who brought me to the location introduced me to Pete the landlord-bookmaker.

In Chicago, I first placed in advertisement on Craigslist.com.⁹ Although I had informal contacts with both bookies and bettors, I wanted to see how useful the technological approach would be to make contact with people. I received five responses within five days. I was surprised by how few responses there were, given how many hits Craigslist receives each day. I can only postulate the reason was fear of being arrested.

With that route a failure, I contacted my old roommate who used to bet at least once a week. He steered me to Jefferson Park where I met his bookie Lucas. During this time, I was teaching a Sociology of Gambling course. One of my students informed me after class that his father was a bookie and ran an illegal gambling den. Through this student, I met his father Oscar, one of the more lucrative bookies I have encountered. I then spoke to a relative of mine whose best friend is a heavy bettor. He then put me in touch with two bookies: Johnny in Montclare and Mack in Little Italy. Mack chose not to participate, but Johnny became one of my longest bookie relationships.

Within a few months of being back in Chicago, I was hanging out at the Off-Track Betting (OTB) sites at least twice a week. It was there I met Freddie. He was spending the day with his cousin (who turned out to not be a cousin but a friend). We spent three months talking once a week before he agreed to participate in the study. I brought him a donut from Big Bear

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⁹ See Figure 1.
Claw each time we met up, and after three months, I was finally able to work with Freddie in New City. By this point, I had moved to the West Town community in Chicago. When I was at the dentist for a cleaning, my dentist and I began talking about my research. His lawyer used a bookie, and so I was put in contact with him. By coincidence, the bookie he frequented lived and worked out of West Town. That I also lived in the community helped to solidify a relationship with Frank.

I already had a potential contact before I landed in Los Angeles. I had gone to get my ear re-pierced about a week before leaving Chicago. The piercer had a friend who lived out in Los Angeles. I told him why I was heading to LA and was given his friend’s contact details. The piercer Adam told me that his friend “knows everything that is going on.” He assured me that if there was a bookie, Mark would know of him. Within two days of landing, I contacted Mark by phone. He was not able to meet me until two weeks later. When we did meet, it was at a small cafe in West Hollywood. He was 45 minutes late, unapologetically so. I almost left out of sheer frustration, but given that I had spent two hours on a bus to get there, it seemed a good idea to see if Mark could help me. He gave me the names and phone numbers of six people who he said were bookies, bettors, or friends of either. On the way home, I managed to lose the piece of paper where he had written the information. I contacted Mark immediately, apologized profusely, and he picked me up and drove me the rest of the way home. We sat in his car in front of my apartment building while he watched me write the names of everyone in my notebook. I thanked him and as he drove off in his Pontiac Thunderbird, he said, ‘If you lose them again, you’re fucked.’ I ran upstairs, typed out the list, and emailed it to myself so there was no way to lose it. Mark’s list of six gave me access to Amado in Echo Park.
My friend who I was staying with in Los Angeles had a boyfriend who lived in North Hollywood. Often, I would spend time with the two of them in his neighborhood. He shared a house with three other guys, all of whom were in the entertainment industry. Two of the men used a bookie that would come by the house on Sundays to watch football and make calls to move the spread line. Vinny was a friend of theirs, and the youngest bookie I had met at 22.

One month in to living in Los Angeles, I went to a birthday party of an acquaintance in Koreatown at a karaoke bar. I met a man named Sammy who was a close friend of the birthday girl. He grew up in Koreatown and still lived in the area at his parents’ apartment. That night, I drove his car home because he was too drunk to drive. I walked back the 14 blocks to the party, and the next day he offered to buy me dinner as thanks. After a good meal and a few hours of conversation, he brought me to his girlfriend’s cousin’s house that was a bookie. This is how I met Paul.

There was no direct route I took with any of the bookies. Much of it was by chance and coincidence. Indeed, for a few of the bookies, I was not seeking them (or any bookie) out; I was in the right place at the right time with the right person. That said, getting the bookies to agree to be a part of this study was arduous work. Being given a name and phone number or address was the easy part. Everyone I spoke with—from my 78-year old neighbor to the cashier at Duane Reade to my tap dance instructor—knew of a bookie or someone who used a bookie. While I knew they were prevalent, it wasn’t until I began this research that I realized how abundant bookies were in cities.

There was little if any incentive for a bookie to agree to participate. I wasn’t offering money, as I had no stipend from which to draw. It would not bring them notoriety or improve their business. If anything, it was a risk for a bookie to work with me, as there was a potential he
could be discovered, ratted out, or found out by authorities. My ability to acquire access to eleven bookies was in part good fortune, the other part hard work. At least four days or nights a week for 1 to 3 months were spent in the presence of bookmakers before I was given permission. My ability to gain access to each bookie was dependent on the situation; there wasn’t a singular magic formula. I believe for a couple of the men, my relationship with one of their clients allowed for them to place trust in me. For others, my role as a woman was significant; they did not see me as a threat, nor did they take me particularly seriously. Yet still, for other bookies, I think it was a matter of persistence, of showing up consistently and proving to them I was serious about the research and their work. For all of the bookies, I think my ability to talk with them, to relate, and to speak of sports in a knowledgeable way was helpful. Having grown up in an environment similar to many of the men (either by ethnicity, class, or location), we had a shared experience from which to base a relationship.

Prior to conducting my research, I assumed I would be able to tape record all of my interviews and participant observations. However, one of the stipulations from each of the bookies was that I could not record anything. This was frustrating if only because taking notes is more onerous, complicated, and time-consuming. Moreover, one’s recollection and ability to recount specific word choices are hindered when there is no recording of the day’s events. Months were spent typing up notes, but it actually became a benefit. Because I had to go through each scribble and each slip of paper, it allowed for me to cull through my data with a fine-tooth comb. I had to decide what was important, what patterns emerged, and what anomalies existed.

THE BREAKDOWN OF BETTORS

The breakdown of my ethnographic research follows. In total, I worked with eleven bookies. Three of these bookies were in the New York neighborhoods of Bay Ridge (Brooklyn),
Park Slope (Brooklyn), and Chinatown (Manhattan). Five of the bookies were in the Chicago neighborhoods of Montclare, New City, Jefferson Park, Lincoln Square, and West Town. Finally, the last three bookies were in the Los Angeles neighborhoods of North Hollywood, Echo Park, and Koreatown. From the eleven bookies, I met 164 clients. All but two clients were male. The only female clients were of the bookie in Lincoln Square, and they were technically his girlfriends not clients (though they did occasionally play mahjong). Eighteen of the clients were from the New York bookies (9, 7, and 2, respectively). One hundred twenty-seven clients came from Chicago bookies (26, 22, 32, 20, and 27, respectively). Nineteen clients were from the Los Angeles bookies (8, 8, and 3, respectively). The amount of clients in Chicago is significantly higher than that in Los Angeles or New York. This is due to two major factors: first, I spent the most amount of time in Chicago and thus had more opportunities to meet bookies and clients. Second, as I am from Chicago, I had a more expansive network and ties to connect me to various bookies and bettors.

Appendix B includes the series of diagram flow charts that show the ties and bonds between bookies and bettors for each neighborhood location. This is a useful aid to show not just how many people are connected, but by what bonds they are connected. Each color line indicates what type of bond one has with another. Likewise, each color box indicates what type of profession or industry the bettor is in. Categories for work type are my own creations, and I feel they split the bettors into clear distinctions by occupational type. In Chapters 5 and 6, I further explore these ties and analyze trust issues among the men. This is particularly interesting in terms of how the men hierarchize whom they trust.

THE GAMBLING MAP: A CITY DIVIDED
In addition to my ethnographic research in these cities, I took on a spatial analysis component for Chicago. Using geographic information systems, I utilized a mapping methodology to further explore gambling in the city. The series of maps in Appendix B was created using ArcMap software to create a visual of arrests in Chicago. When cross-examining the methodologies, it was clear to me there were major distinctions between who was arrested for gambling charges and who was doing the gambling. Demographic data is from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2010 decennial census. These maps serve an important function in understanding what, where, and to whom arrests occur. Further, the maps allow the reader to visualize the spatial proximity of bookies and clients.

Map 1 shows the locations of gambling arrests and median household income (MHHI) for 2010. Of the 10,429 arrests from 2007-2010, 9,622 of them occurred in areas whose median household income was less than $40,000. With 2010 income data, 9,443 of the 10,429 arrests occurred in areas averaging less than $40,000 per household. Alternatively, four of the five bookie locations are in areas with a median household income of $40,001-$65,000. The fifth location is centered in an area with a median household income of $20,001-$40,000 (Map 2).

Moreover, only six of the 127 bettors lived in census tracts with a median household income of $20,001-$40,000. Eight resided in communities with a MHHI of $95,001-$155,000, 29 in areas with a MHHI of $65,001-$95,000, and six in areas with a MHHI of $1-20,000. The bulk of bettors, 78 out of 127, live in census tracts that can be considered middle/lower middle class, averaging $40,001-65,000 in household income.

Chart 5 displays the number of gambling arrests in census tracts with less than $20,000 median household income and tracts with income between $20,001-$40,000. While the number of arrests in tracts less than $20,000 is not huge, the number of arrests with a median household
income of less than $40,000 is significant. In 2007, 2008, and 2009, an average of 86% of arrests were in such tracts. In 2010, the percentage increased marginally to 88%. It is clear neighborhoods of lower economic position are more likely to be targets for gambling arrests. It is important to note these locations are where gambling arrests occur—not where the only gambling in the city takes place. This is an important distinction because if one only examines arrests rates, it would appear gambling takes place solely in African American or low-income communities. On the other hand, Graphs 1-5 and their subsets show median household income of each of the bookie community areas.

Although the majority of mapping analyses are examined at the community area or census tract level, Map 3 shows the city of Chicago divided by police wards. This is done to explore clusters of gambling arrests and the specific police districts that have to deal with said arrests. As shown, certain wards have a much more significant issue when it comes to these types of arrests. Again, though, we see the location of bookies and their clients in wards where there are little to no gambling arrests (Map 3). There is a clear disconnect from the police department between the persons (and types of persons) being arrested for gambling and the persons who are gambling. During my visits to Ward 15, which encompasses the Austin Community Area, the police I spoke with confirmed gambling is a large issue in their district. In fact, of the eight men I talked with, all but one expressed genuine concern with the amount of gambling that takes place in the community. Frank, the policeman who didn’t, was a veteran with 18 years on the job. He stood tall at 6’3”, towering over my frame as he leaned against the building on Madison Ave. His posture perfect, he took a deep sigh each time he started speaking.

‘It’s bull. Everyone knows it. I’ve got hookers holding the corners. And the ones where the hookers aren’t, I’ve got these young ones selling everything they can get a hold of. Boys
shooting shit up because they gotta have something. They gotta show they have something.’

Frank was annoyed by the dice games, but he wasn’t concerned. He appeared exhausted with the prospect of having a discussion about it. He saw the arrests as a waste of resources and policemen’s time. Having grown up only 6 blocks away from his beat, Frank knew the area better than some of the residents. He was a teen in the 1980s, and saw the community shift to heavy crime and poverty brought on by the growing crack epidemic and loss of manufacturing in urban centers. Frank ran track in high school but by his own admission, was lured by what the streets had to offer. Though his criminal behavior was brief and largely innocuous, it left him keenly aware of the neighborhood’s real issues.

Frank spoke about the lack of employment opportunities and ability to garner a real wage. He sighed and said race issues hadn’t gone away since he was young.

‘We act like we’ve improved. We act like we’re one. Like we’re all Chicagoans. But most Chicagoans never get to have Chicago. They get this little piece on a shitty block that the rest of the city ignores and avoids if they can.’

What Frank said resonated with me. I was a child in the eighties and can vividly recall the evening news, Tribune headlines, and general discussions about the city’s violence, drug dealing, and economic hardships. Relatives had lost their jobs at the meat packing factories or electronic plants, then lost their homes when they could not pay the mortgage. At the same time, people in the Loop were making enormous sums of money at the Board of Trade and Stock Exchange, but these were foreign people to us. They were living in a playground where the rest of us were just steel support beams. Frank didn’t whine about the hardships; he was just honest about the plight.

\[10\] Frank never discussed what it was he did; he spoke vaguely about his illegal activity and did not talk in specifics. I didn’t press or ask because I felt it was something he would have shared if he wanted to.
I felt similar and understood his concern with the lack of resources and employment much of the South and West Sides faced.

**TIME TO CLOSE SHOP: URBAN SPATIAL CONTROL**

When examining gambling arrests, it is imperative to analyze the time the arrest occurred. Map 4 displays such information, with the day broken into 4 equal time frames of 6 hours: Midnight to 6am, 6am to Noon, Noon to 6 pm, and 6pm to Midnight. Of the 10,429 arrests, over 55% of arrests (5,829 out of 10,429) occurred between 6pm to Midnight. Following that, 3,495 arrests (33%) occurred between the hours of Noon to 6pm. Next, 569, approximately 5.4%, arrests occurred between Midnight to 6am. Finally, the fewest arrests occurred between the hours of 6am to Noon (only 536 arrests, or 5.1%). Thus, the bulk of the gambling arrests occur in the evening hours. Of significance is the majority of gambling through bookies also occurs during evening hours, yet there are almost zero arrests for sports bettors. I argue this is largely due to what one Chicago Police officer affectionately referred to as “shit sweeping.”

One of the objectives for beat officers on the evening shift is to clean the streets of people, particularly people of color. This is done under the guise of ensuring public space is safe and useable for everyone. Officers will patrol the streets and arrest persons for various charges, often minor offenses. Gambling arrests are known by many to be quick, easy, and high in number. Often, those arrested are younger (teens to early 20s), male, and persons of color. Of the 10,429 gambling arrests made in a 3 year period, over 99.5% were made for “Dice Games,” a form of gambling play common in the African American community (Map 5).

Dice is a wagered game played in alleys, on the side of a building, in the streets, or hallways of a building. Though Chinese in origin, dice, or “Cee-lo” as it is often known, is popular among youth, particularly African American youth. Although Cee-lo can be played with
a “banker,” the majority of games I saw didn’t use one. In this version of the dice game, 2 players at a time compete against each other. A monetary amount is agreed upon (ranging from a dime to $1 from my observations), and both players put said amount into the pot. Each player rolls three dice at once until one player hits a known combination. The combinations most commonly recognized are: 4-5-6, Trips (three of the same number), Point (a pair from 2 of the dice, and another number which is known as the point), and 1-2-3. Whoever gets the best combination wins that round and the entire pot. The players then start again or new players come in and play. It is, by my interpretation, a low wager game compared to the wagers bettors make with bookies. Most of the boys I watched play Cee-lo would put up $1 in the pot. Yet, almost all gambling arrests were for such games.

Frustrated by the fact that young boys engaging in leisure activities were being scooped up by the police, I asked a policeman why this happens so often. We had met in June of 2008 at Gay Pride in the Boystown neighborhood. He had just told a kid to quit whining because he wasn’t going to arrest him over the joint the young man was clearly trying to hide. In his fifties, Mark had a warm smile and anxious walk. We had a laugh about the young man sitting on the curb of the 7-11 parking lot and that was it. I thought it fate then when I was at Chicago Police Headquarters four months later and Mark was in the lobby working as the front desk person. We talked that day and continued a semi-regular conversation over the next year.

Mark explained to me two reasons why the boys are targeted: one official answer and one off the books answer. The official reason is often these small dice games turn violent and someone pulls out a knife or other weapon. The unofficial reason Mark gave me is these dice arrests are quick, there is little dispute, it boosts arrest rates, and it makes the streets look safer. The arrests are a shining example of Chicago’s police state and its focus on spatial
governmentality. John, a retired detective who now teaches at the Police Academy, discussed this motivation over coffee one Tuesday. He is an old family friend and I have long respected him and the work he did while on the job.

‘You see, you got so many people to answer to. You got a cop, and he’s in one of the worst zones…It’s one fucking call after another about this shooting or this stabbing. It wears on you… You gotta hit a certain number of arrests and you start thinking hey, these are easy. And then you start thinking, hey, I’m doing the right thing. I’m keeping these kids off the street; I’m keeping them out of harm’s way. I’m doing good. And after a while, it’s routine. You know the characters, you know who to look out for, what corners to check. Half these guys could close their eyes and know what alley something’s happening in.’

THE COLOR OF GAMBLING ARRESTS

John’s description of the situation is sympathetic to both sides. However, only one of these sides is racking up an arrest sheet that is not only costly, but certainly reducing one’s life chances. The dice arrests are almost exclusively male and overwhelmingly boys of color. True, too, is the cluster effect we see with these gambling arrests. The majority of arrests occur along the West and South Sides of Chicago in predominately Black areas with a residential population of 90% or more African American (Map 6).

By comparison, four of the five bookie locations are in predominately White communities, and one is in a predominately Hispanic community. Though each of the bookies has bettors in a variety of community areas, the majority live in predominately White communities (Map 7). Further, the bettors themselves are majority White. This data is strikingly different in demographic makeup than the gambling arrests. Thus, who is being criminalized for

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11 Omission by author’s choice.
gambling is an already marginalized population. Of the 164 bettors I spoke with, only two expressed concerns about their participation in illegal gambling. The rest seemed nonchalant about the potential legal repercussions. This is not because they were unaware their actions were arrest-worthy. Rather, when pressed, the majority believed cops didn’t care and what they were doing wasn’t hurting anyone. This is discussed further in the work, but it is significant to note the bravado the men possess.

By contrast, the boys I spent time with in the community area of Austin were keenly aware of the police and their sweeps. They often had lookouts around the corner to watch for police cars. They had a heightened sense of insecurity and fear that the game could be broken up at any time by authorities.

In Map 8, I explore the gambling arrest locations with designated Empowerment Zones. Enacted by the Department of Planning and Development, Chicago was one of six cities selected to engage in the Empowerment Zone Program. The goal of the program is to revitalize distressed neighborhoods through economic empowerment, affordable housing, public safety, cultural diversity, health and human services, and youth futures. Chicago designated three areas as these zones along the South, West, and near Southwest Sides. As shown, many of the arrests are centrally located in and around these Empowerment Zones (Map 8). Of the 10,429 arrests, 2,111 (20%) are located within Empowerment Zone areas. This reinforces the notion of spatial governmentality and the process of street sweeping to remove offenses or incivilities.

By comparison, none of the five bookie locations are located in Empowerment Zones. Two locations are within .5 miles of Zone, and one of these community areas has seen dramatic gentrification in the past decade.

The notion of spatial governmentality in urban places has been well researched (Ericson & Haggerty 1997; Perry & Sanchez 1998; Merry 2001). Rather than prevent crime, the goal is to manage risk. Police and authority target space by eliminating offensive behavior from a specified place; the intent is not to reform the offenders but to create order through tolerated risk of space. Examples of such type of authoritative control in past research have included prostitution-free zones, violence-free zones, and gated communities, to name a few. From the data, I argue the same type of disciplinary technique occurs. In urban life, these petty offenses are controlled in space—either through risk management (sweeps of the streets) or through arrests of the dice players. It is no surprise to see the cluster of arrests centered on newly defined “Empowerment Zones” in Chicago.

Rather than focus on the larger issue of limited resources and lack of employment opportunities in these impoverished areas, police regulate the space. The street sweeps occur regularly and the goal is to remove incivilities such as youth playing dice. Arrests are made if the issue persists, and the space looks safe and social order appears restored. It makes sense, then, the majority of arrests for gambling occur between the hours of 6pm-12am (Map 4). This is when people are on the streets, coming home from work, going out for entertainment, and feeling unsafe as the sun departs and night settles into the sky. Building and maintaining a safe community thus entails disciplining the community space. Indeed, even during my short time with some of the boys on the West Side who played dice, I observed them relocate from a main street corner to 3 blocks away off a small side back alley. When asked, they explained even though it was harder to see the cops coming now, the police weren’t patrolling nearly as often over there. Since it wasn’t a main street where other residents or persons used the space frequently and consistently, there was no need to use manpower to regulate the space.
The transition toward spatial governmentality in urban life is further reinforced through where the gambling arrests occur. Of the 10,429 arrests, 9,206 (88.2%) arrests were made when the person was gambling in a public or outdoor space (Map 9). These outdoor arrests are in concentrated in a few select Community Areas: Austin, North Lawndale, East Garfield Park, and West Garfield Park. These four neighborhoods are located on Chicago’s West Side, are characterized by urban decay, crime, and a concentrated poor African American population. Each of the areas has at least a 89% or higher Black population and a median household income below $40,000 per year.

THE SAFETY OF INSIDE

There is a distinct pattern of arrests based on the race of the gambler (Map 10). Of the 10,429 arrests from 2007-2010, 9,920 arrests were made in majority African American neighborhoods (possessing at least 50% Black population). Consequently, 95.1% of the arrests are in predominately African American communities. Of the 509 arrests not in African American communities, only 41, or 0.39%, are located in majority White communities (Map 11). The majority White community areas do not appear to be police targets for gambling. However, the majority of bookies are located in White communities, as are many of the bettors (Map 7). I argue the reason for this discrepancy is largely due to spatial governmentality. Bookies and their clients work indoors, they gamble indoors, and money exchanges hands indoors. They do not present, from the outside, a community risk. Their presence does not equate to harm, violence, or danger in the neighborhood. On the other hand, the gambling activity performed in predominately African American communities is largely outdoors (Map 9).

Of the 10,429 arrests, 9,206 were outdoors. In other words, the gambling activity took place in an outdoor location. The Chicago Police Data I was given lists out where each arrest
took place. I then designated each location as either indoors or outdoors, in the hopes of finding a pattern. Indeed, as Map 9 shows, 88.3% of gambling arrests occurred in outdoors spaces. Moreover, the arrests that are outdoors are clustered in the same community areas along the West and South Sides of Chicago.

THE UBIQUITY OF GAMBLING

Also of interest is educational attainment and occupation type in each of Chicago’s community areas. Maps 12 and 13 focus on male educational attainment, with the latter overlaying a racial demographic component in each area. Each dot on the map represents a count of 400 males. The categories of educational attainment are standard divisions from the U.S. Census Bureau. Both the South and West Sides have a majority of the male population with either a No School to 12th grade or High School Diploma to Some College (Map 12). Moreover, these locations are predominately African American in population (Map 13). If we compare Map 12 to Map 9, we see the overlap of arrests that occur in areas of Chicago where educational attainment levels are low.

By contrast, the bookie and bettor locations are in communities with a much more diverse male population in terms of educational attainment (Map 12). Educational levels have a wider range in these communities, ranging from No School to PhD. The areas where the bookies operate are arguably more stable in terms of economics, and this is further enforced by their higher average educational attainment. Chart 6 shows a comparison of educational attainments between the city of Chicago and the five bookie locations. Three of the five locations (West

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13 The locations are as follows: Abandoned Building, Alley, Apartment, Bar or Tavern, CHA Hallway/Stairwell/Elevator, CHA Parking Lot/Grounds, CTA Platform, CTA Train, Driveway-Residential, Gas Station, Other Railroad Property/Train Depot, Park Property, Parking Lot/Garage (Non-Residence), Police Facility/Vehicle Parking Lot, Residence, Residence-Garage, Residence Porch/Hallway, Residential Yard (Front/Back), Restaurant, School (Private Grounds), School (Public Grounds), Sidewalk, Street, Tavern/Liquor Store, Vacant Property, Vehicle Non-Commercial.
Town, Jefferson Park, and Lincoln Square) had higher rates of Higher Education than the city (Bachelor’s degree).

Varying occupational types is also of interest to examine. Again, the focus is on male occupational type, as it is predominately this sex who gambles. Each dot on the map represents 350 males in the workforce (Map 14). Graphs 1-5 display industry type breakdowns for each of the bettor locations, as well as income averages.

Most striking is how few males are employed in majority African American communities (Map 15). Of those who are working, it is most frequently in Service or Production work. These areas with the fewest male population in the workforce are also the areas with the highest gambling arrest rates. We see, then, a dearth of legal economic opportunities for men. Without such options, one can reasonably argue there will be higher rates of illegal, underground economic activity including the drug trade and gambling. Dede, a 19-year-old African American youth from the Austin community, is an example of viable economic pursuit.

**WORKING FOR IT**

We sat on the stoop of a once-beautiful abandoned Victorian house around the corner from his family’s residence. Dede was short but gawky, made more obvious by the oversized T-shirt and baggy shorts he wore. He lived with his two aunts, his grand uncle, and six siblings. On occasion, his mother would stay with them, but it was never more than a few days at a time. He said she worked a lot, but his grand uncle Robert said she was “a running around fool.” Dede was the oldest of the siblings and worked part-time at a fast food restaurant 1 mile south of his home. He was expected to contribute to the rent and household upkeep, but his meager wage was little supplement. Both his aunts worked: one at a call center in the Loop, the other did hair in the house for local ladies. With ten people in the house and only three working, they were barely
scraping by. Dede was a regular at a corner dice game I watched, spending at least three days of
the week in play. I asked why he would risk losing his hard-earned money from his job on a
game that someone else could just take away.

‘I’m not risking losing it. I’m risking winning more. And it don’t matter anyway. It’s not
like it’s a hundred dollars. It’s gotta go over to my Aunties anyway so it’s not really mine to
begin with.’

Dede’s attitude towards his wages is similar to how many of the boys who play dice felt.
They saw it as a paltry sum, something they could not pay for college with, pay rent with, or
even buy a pair of sneakers with. Their financial understanding was in the present, and they
didn’t look beyond that day’s wage or winnings. I explained to Dede that if he took $20 a week
he would normally spend playing dice and save it, in less than a year he would have $1,000.

He was thoughtful for a moment and looked as if he was trying to see if my math was
correct. Then, after a moment, he said, ‘Yea, but who knows what’s gonna happen in a year?
And maybe I roll well and I have $2,000 by the end of the year.’ Again, for Dede and many
others, rolling the bones made more fiscal sense than a savings account. Everything was
ephemeral, and there was no reason to plan for something you didn’t know would happen. Dede
also believed his working wages to be his family’s, not his. This made him feel as though he had
no control over his money; thus, he felt freer to gamble with his paycheck, and in doing so
gained a modicum of autonomy.

The bookie locations are in five community areas with much higher levels of male
occupational levels. As well, there is a much stronger presence of white-collar and managerial
positions. While some of the areas such as Jefferson Park and Montclare have a strong blue-
collar presence, there is stability in both communities. Chart 7 (and a more specific breakdown in
Graphs 1-5) displays the five bookie locations compared to the city in terms of male occupation type. West Town and Lincoln Square, the two gentrified community areas, have significantly higher rates of Management occupations than the city’s average. As well, New City, Montclare, and Jefferson Park have higher rates of Construction than Chicago. This is no surprise, as the latter are arguably more working-class in ethos and history. Industry was built heavily along the West and South Sides at the turn of the twentieth century; as well, ethnic enclaves from the large European immigration period settled there, most of who were in unskilled and semi-skilled labor.

**THE LOST BOYS: GENTRIFIED COMMUNITIES, STABLE SELVES**

In 2010, the unemployment rate hit 11.6% for the city of Chicago. Though unemployment rates were on average lower for bookie locations than the community areas where arrests took place, there is significant variance among the areas. For example, New City, located on the South Side of Chicago, has a 19.8% unemployment rate for persons over 16 years of age. By contrast, West Town is 6%, Lincoln Square 6.9%, while Montclare has 12% and Jefferson Park 11.5%.

Of the five areas where bookmakers are located, New City is the only one located on the South Side with a non-majority White population. As well, of all five of the communities, New City was hit the hardest by deindustrialization. Once home to factories and meat packing plants, most famously the Union Stock Yards, the community has seen decline since the 1970s. After the closing of plants, New City’s population shifted from European to Mexican immigrants, as many of the prior residents left when the work disappeared. Much of the South and West Sides saw job loss as industrial zones moved out of the city and into the sprawling suburbs.

Don, a bettor in New City, has been a resident of the neighborhood his entire life. He lives in the cottage he grew up in, having inherited it after his mother passed away in 2001.

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14 Data compiled from U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011.
Although he now works a white-collar city job, he grew up in a working-class family, his grandfather having spent his entire working life at Swift & Co. until the plant closed in 1953. The family lived in one of the worker’s cottages off Cornell Square, and it remains two generations later.

‘I remember growing up, knowing these streets, knowing them so well I could tell you where a crack in the sidewalk was gonna be. We were really tight. My dad (pause) he wasn’t a racist. But he liked our neighborhood how it was when he was growing up. It was the ‘70s and everything just seemed hard. All the old businesses gone, the Blacks trying to move in, it was like a firecracker going off every day.’

Born in 1962, Don’s youth was not a picture of a happy family. His father liked whiskey enough to prevent him from holding down a steady job, and he left the family permanently when he was 12. Don’s grandfather was a source of consistency in his childhood, and Don loved to hear stories about the slaughterhouse. The neighborhood used to be divided by Eastern and Southern European enclaves - Polish, Lithuanian, Slavic - most of whom worked in one of the plants. The transition to a multi-ethnic and racial composition left some, like Don’s father, bitter and saw this as the source of economic transition. Others, who remained residents even after the stockyards shuttered their doors, wore the neighborhood’s history on their sleeve. They were strong, able to put up with anything; they were men. Even a half century later, after the meat packaging plants have closed and ethnic populations shifted, the neighborhood remains strongly working class, both in ideology and practice. The men who have stayed behind possess a sense of pride in not having left the neighborhood. They have weathered the storm, so to speak, digging their work boots into the pavement, and see their residency as a badge of honor.
Jefferson Park and Montclare, like New City, have a strong working class feel and history. This sentiment reinforces and makes permissible the men who bet in these neighborhoods. The working class identity, imagined or real, promotes heteronormative masculinity and betting allows a space for this production. Similar ideology was seen in bookie locations in New York during my ethnographic research.

Finally, I explore housing occupancy in community areas in Chicago. Initially, I believed the lowest percentage of housing occupancy would correlate to the community areas with the highest gambling arrests (Map 16). While there are a few areas with below 75% housing occupancy that have a high number of arrests, there are not enough to show a pattern or conclusive correlation. Four of the five bookie locations are in areas with a housing occupancy of 85-95%, and the other (New City) has an occupancy rate of 75-85%. These rates are similar to those where gambling arrests occur. Thus, the percentage of occupied housing is not relevant to where arrests occur or bookmakers occupy space.

While levels of housing occupancy is not significant, the year moved in to the owner occupied housing shows intriguing results (Graphs 1-5). Montclare and Jefferson Park have high rates of community stability.

The mapping technology employed in this dissertation was invaluable for my analyses. Patterns emerged both for gambling arrest locations and bookie locations. The city of Chicago provides an informative backdrop to show not only how pervasive gambling is, but how concentrated it is in specific locations. As well, the visuals provided by the mapping analysis display clear differentiation between those who bet with bookies and those who are arrested for gambling.

THE SEX OF THE BET: MY POSITION AS A WOMAN
I spent just over five years conducting research, and the vast majority of the time was spent in the company of men. It would be naïve and careless of me as an ethnographer not to address my position as a woman in almost exclusively male environments. When I chose to undertake this research, I knew my sex might be a concern in some respects. I do not believe only women can conduct female studies, nor do I believe only the working-class can analyze their class group. Of course, it would be absurd not to acknowledge that being a female played a role in my ethnography. While at times it was a hindrance, I cannot deny that my sex was also an incredible benefit with both the bookmakers and the clients.

Had I been asked prior to beginning this research, I would have scoffed at the notion that my sex would be relevant in the research. Two weeks after beginning, however, it became apparent just how obvious my being a female was in the gambling den. I was the only woman present for much of the interactions, I was the only woman engaging with the clients, and I was the only woman attempting to speak about sports. My physical presence, my female self, occupied space in the gambling den. There was never a set formula for how I would be treated when I began work with a bookie-contempt, sneers, apathy, confusion, excitement were all sentiments I received from various clients. I never tried to alter my behavior or look to create a more masculine self to appease the bettors; it would have appeared false and they would have seen through it.

I think entering into any type of ethnographic research is tricky, particularly when you are the other—the other sex, the other sexuality, the other race. Bookmaking, and gambling in general, is a masculine domain, and the locations I spent time at could very much be considered masculine dens. As a woman, there were difficulties interacting with an almost exclusively male population. I grew up around a lot of men, specifically working-class Italian men, and my level
of comfort around the male sex is, I would guess, above average. As a gay woman, my othering was a novelty for the men, though I kept my personal life out of discussion as much as possible.\textsuperscript{15} Most who were aware of my sexuality were titillated by it, and group discussions were highly inappropriate, both with their questions and their comments. It was already a hypermasculinized space, and my sexuality provided endless fodder and fantasies from which they could draw.

My first experience with this ethnographic work was one of the easier attempts. I was introduced to the bookie through a friend. We began talking about boxing, the demise of heavyweight greats and the sport in general, and how the 1990s corrupted the game so much that it was almost unrecognizable. He took to me quickly and it was fairly easy to gain trust with him. I was honest from the beginning about my work, and I promised him anonymity and protection. As time went by, his trust in me grew, and he barely took notice of me while he worked. His clients were a different story, as many of them were anxious in my presence. They asked a lot of questions and frequently hit on me. I don’t think there was any sub-context to it, in that I don’t think they hit on me in the hopes of skewing my data or so I wouldn’t write about them. I think this is often what happens when a woman enters a masculine space: the reproduction of heteronormative masculinity through heterosexual action surfaces.

(OF)FENDING YOUTH: KEEPING SOCIAL DISTANCE

By the time I began research in West Town, I noticed a pattern emerge of who hit on me, and it varied by race and ethnicity. Italian men, especially the older ones, were very protective. They wanted to make sure I was staying in school, that I had enough money, that I had enough to eat (one of the men used to bring me Italian beef sandwiches), or that I wasn’t taking drugs. They became aggressive with the men who did try to hit on me, and would immediately step into the

\textsuperscript{15} I never lied if asked outright, but did not offer up the information freely.
crosshairs. I never asked for protection, nor intimated that I needed it, but it was there. I couldn’t prevent it any more than I could prevent other men from hitting on me.

The men between 18-36 were the biggest offenders in terms of sexual advances. The den was their domain, and they felt a sense of entitlement. Some were more discreet than others, choosing to just casually touch me, offering to rub my shoulders, brushing up against me, or running their hand across my back. Others were more direct and would try to corner me, kiss me, play with my hair, ask me out, or drop sexual comments into the conversation (“if he gets this field goal, AnneMarie will blow Tommy”). Even if I went home and complained about it, I never showed signs of distress or discomfort because of their actions. I kept composure when I was in their space, though often times I would crack as soon as I left. Only once did I cry, and that was after I had watched four of the men beat up a skaghead in Park Slope.

I did, however, feel like my personal space was constantly being infringed upon. I felt unsafe at times on my way home, unsure if one of them would follow me home or try to stop me on my way to the subway. Just as much as it was their den of masculinity and it was their cocoon of safety, so too was it my cocoon of safety. I knew nothing would ever go past a certain point while I was encased in those 4 walls. However, outside was fair game, and I was constantly on guard when entering public space. While Day (2001) has noted women have fear of social spaces where fights may occurs such as a bar or pool hall, I felt soothed by these social spaces; it was the public space, the urban landscape, where I felt an elevated sense of fear. I knew in those dens there was always someone who would step in if things got out of hand, and I also knew there was a line you didn’t cross in those rooms.

The men could tease me, tell me I’m pretty, make a joke about whether or not I was wild in bed…that was all fine because that was a reaffirmation of their masculinity, specifically their
heterosexual masculinity. I understood this was the space to reproduce such forms of talk. The behavior and language was in line with being male, with performing masculinity. Even if some men didn’t engage in it, they still understood that was a part of the space, and certainly one of the only spaces left in their world they could act or speak in such a way. Hurting a woman, being violent with a woman, or attacking a woman were not allowed in those spaces. That wasn’t a confirmation of your masculinity; that was going too far. This was consistent across social class—there was no level of acceptability for hurting a woman. It was frowned upon and there were sanctions for that type of behavior. Of course, this behavior was frowned upon in a group setting where normative standards were paramount; I suspect, and can confirm at least one, there were a few males who behaved violently toward women in private spaces. The only place this mentality varied was in Lincoln Square, as domestic violence was acknowledged and agreed upon as a legitimate practice by husbands against wives.

There was one male bettor in West Town who worked at the Board of Trade. He was in his early 20s, very cocky and successful financially. He was a bit drunk and slid his hand up my thigh and pried my legs open. Topher, a regular bettor, saw this and stepped in immediately. He took the man by the neck and wrist and quietly walked him outside. I didn’t see the trader for another 3 months, and when I did, he barely looked me in the eye. I was protected in these dens because there was a code of masculinity and masculine behavior. Part of this code is a skewed sense of chivalry they have towards women. The men I worked with wanted to father me or fuck me. Either way, there were invisible boundary lines at every turn, and it reinforced the sense of protection I felt.

EASING INTO IT
Although my sex was an issue, I believe I had an easier time than most women would have for a couple of reasons. Firstly, I can speak on the subject of sports fairly well and with some level of authority. I can hold my own in a conversation about boxing, baseball, basketball, and football. Though it was offered begrudgingly at times, I had to be taken somewhat seriously after multiple conversations and informal quizzes testing my knowledge.

Secondly, I can get on with almost anyone, male or female. I do well with strangers, often keeping the focus on them, as I’ve learned over the years how much people actually enjoy talking about themselves. I was never shy in the field, and I think that helped. I joke around a lot, and I can be self-deprecating. It put a lot of the men at ease that I could handle and offer up tasteless jokes. I’m barely 4’10” and, good or bad, it makes most people I meet feel comfortable. I’m innocuous at that height and clearly not a threat. Also, by conventional standards, I can be considered somewhat attractive. If I’m being honest, I’m sure that helped get men to talk to me. They wanted to impress me, either with their wins, their knowledge, their money, and so on. They were more open with me from the get-go than perhaps they would have been with another female. I was young when I began the ethnography (24), and my age helped too. I think many of them saw me as foolish, or at the very least, naïve. Again, it all culminated to create a very non-threatening air around me.

The biggest difficulty I had in terms of my sex playing a role was with the Asian men in Lincoln Square, followed by the Chinese men in Chinatown. They treated me terribly by comparison to other ethnic groups, would speak down to me, would talk about me in their native tongue, and considered me a cocktail waitress or errand girl. Very few actually opened up to me and often they would ignore me when I asked them a question directly. There were clear lines in place for them about where a woman should be or what a woman should do, and I violated both
of them by my presence. More so than any other bookie location or ethnic group, the Asian population perpetuated male-exclusive space. I did not take offense, and in some ways it made me work harder to secure research. It pushed me to want to understand these distinctions, which I believe is invaluable in the field of ethnic identity. To understand ethnic solidarity is not a singular process; how groups identify and create cohesion vary based on the needs and desires of that particular group. While my role as a woman at times was mentally exhaustive and trying, I would not trade my time spent in the dens; the rewards of exploring these masculine domains far exceeded the penalties.
Part II
Communities
Chapter 3: Betting on the Community: Space at Work

“I’ve got to hold it together. We’ve got to fend for ourselves down here. So I say come and get down and let’s see what we can do.” --Freddie, Bookie in New City

BEGUILE THE BOOKIE

In today’s technologically geared society, there are seemingly endless avenues one can take to place bets. There are dozens of sites offering every type of sports betting, many offering sign up bonuses upwards of $250. One can bet on a MMA match, Snooker Futures, or the Oscars Best Picture. More recently, online sportsbooks have come up with mobile apps for your phone, ensuring you never miss a piece of the action. The waters are murky when it comes to the legality of betting online, though most sites assuage a bettor’s fears. Many of the companies are based offshore, making it easier to navigate legal loopholes. To date, no bettor has been charged with using online bookmakers to place a sports bet.

There are three main Acts in the United States that are relevant to gambling: The Wire Act of 1961, The Unlawful Internet Gaming Enforcement Act (UIEGA), and The Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act. All are, in the words of one online bettor, fairly toothless.

The Wire Act of 1961, 18U.S.C. § 1084, was initially meant to outlaw bookies who worked outside of Las Vegas. The federal code stated,

“Whoever being engaged in the business of betting or wagering knowingly uses a wire communication facility for the transmission in interstate or foreign commerce of bets or wagers or information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers on any sporting event or contest, or for the transmission of a wire communication which entitles the recipient to receive money or credit

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16 See Bovada, one of the largest online sportsbook companies: sports.bovada.lv
as a result of bets or wagers, or for information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both.”

The Act was geared towards targeting telephone wires, as was the most common method of wagering at the time. Brought forth to Congress by then-Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, the goal was to stop organized crime. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Justice declared the Act only applied to sports betting, thus freeing online poker rooms, state lotteries, and other non-sports wagering that occurs online. It is unclear whether sports betting online is a specific target, but if so, many will argue The Act is only used to prosecute owners of sites, not the bettors.

In the 1990s, the U.S. enacted PASPA (Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act), which curtailed the number of states that would be allowed to offer sports gambling. Only four states—Nevada, Delaware, Oregon, and Montana—were given approval for legalized sports betting. Delaware does have NFL parlay betting, but the latter two have never regulated sports betting despite the U.S. government granting permission. PASPA holds only for land-based wagering, so online gambling is safe from prosecution under this Act.

Finally, the UIEGA of 2006 was enacted to target financial institutions rather than the bettors or bookies. The intent was to stop U.S. financial companies from processing payments affiliated with online gambling sites. However, the law says nothing about the legality of betting online, once again leaving wiggle room for bettors. Although it was tricky for a while to deposit and withdraw money, there are now a plethora of options, such as prepaid cards and non-U.S. wire transfers, again giving bettors myriad options.

Thus, the ease and loose legal framework of online betting seems an appropriate choice for sports bettors. One can bet from his couch, with a credit card (and thus a line of credit), 24 hours a day. It seems unusual then that so many continue to bet with a bookie, which is arguably
less convenient, more risky, and more difficult financially. While it quickly came to light, I did not realize at the beginning of my research just how prevalent bookies, or locals as they are sometimes referred to in betting circles, are in communities. Everyone I spoke to about my research had a story to tell and a friend, relative, realtor they knew who bet with a bookie.

What sociologists (see: Simmel 1903; Wirth 1938; Putnam 1995) have lamented for almost a century seemed at odds with what I saw in my research. People were not isolated in the city, nor were they ‘tuned out’. Rather, the men who bet with bookies do so because they are seeking a shared space, a community, and a togetherness, in the city. Certainly, it is more time-consuming to bet with a bookie; yet, men happily spent hours in the company of other bettors. Betting with a bookie is also financially limited to what cash you have. While bookies run a line of credit, it’s minimal compared to what one can acquire through a credit card. Moreover, bettors are spatially limited to the range of travel to visit the bookie. In every regard, betting online seems the safer and easier choice. But the men who bet with bookies did so consistently and with dedication. All turned their nose up at the prospect of betting online.

Mario, a long-time bettor in Bay Ridge, explained to me that betting online was akin to accessing porn online: yes, the act takes place, but you lose something in the process. He argued the action was done in a minute and it wasn’t enjoyable. His articulation of the betting process is aligned with what many of the other bettors tried to verbalize. The act of betting is not what is of value; it is the process and interaction, the situation that forms from betting, and the social grouping that is of importance. Placing a bet with a bookie takes anywhere from 15 seconds to 2 minutes; it is quick and formulaic. The rest of the time spent in the gambling dens is where social capital, social cohesion, and community form.
Arriving before a game or match starts, as many of the bettors do, allows time to discuss the event, to debate players’ strengths and teams’ weaknesses. It gives bettors a chance to engage and size one another up. Watching the game together permits the bettors to celebrate or commiserate together, or to give praise to another bettor who has correctly laid a bet. Peter and Sebastian, co-workers and friends, discussed why they liked betting in the Jefferson Park den. They acknowledged it was difficult financially at times, yet both believed it was worth it.

Sebastian, despite racking up a $15,000 debt to Lucas, was emphatic about betting with a local.

‘I want to come here and see everyone. I like having a few hours to spend with the guys.’

Having moved to the western suburbs a few years back, the den is the only third space Sebastian has left. The third space is neither work nor home, but rather an informal setting for public life that allows stimulation and shared fellowship (Oldenburg 1989). With the rapid disappearance of such places, the gambling den persists and allows for this interaction to take place. This is, of course, only true for men, as the dens are sex-exclusive,17 perhaps even more reason why they are so important in urban communities. Since the 1970s, an economic restructuring has occurred, with the relocation of many blue-collar, traditionally-male occupations out of the urban landscape. By 1985, the service sector employed nearly three-quarters of workers in the United States. Many have argued the decline of middle-class jobs is largely due to the service industry; it does not provide an income the same way union jobs once did. However, the decline of manufacturing and union jobs also means the decline of many sex-segregated work spaces, which fulfilled a sense of community for many of the workers.

Deindustrialization left urban communities, and many male residents, without job opportunities

17 They are sex-exclusive not by force or law, but by the mere fact that what they provide is generally not desirable to women.
or a shared space. While not to undermine the economic loss, the fatality of a communal space is great.

Of the 164 bettors I interacted with, 129 (78.6%) cited ‘being around other guys’ as a main reason for laying a bet with a bookie. The shared third space that emerges from the dens creates a stabilizing force in communities; it is an anchor for the men who are otherwise lost at sea in a rapidly changing economy and gentrifying neighborhood. Park Slope, West Town, New City, Echo Park, and to lesser degrees, Bay Ridge and Lincoln Square, have undergone racial and ethnic population shifts in recent decades. Local networks once formed through labor no longer exist, and the den has come to be a locale that fulfills this need in the community. These community areas have also endured deindustrialization, pushing many of the men into isolation. The majority (88%) of bettors from these areas described feelings of insecurity and unsteadiness in their community. Just as class is tied to social identity, so too is it tied to space. The gambling dens give the men a place to meet, to have a captive audience for stories, complaints, and reminiscing.

THE TIES THAT BIND

As of 2008, over 50% of world’s population live in urban areas. In the United States, over 80% of the population lives in the metropolitan area. The examination of urban life today is more important than ever, as is the exploration of communities within these urban areas.

Urban sociology has its roots in neighborhood analysis, favoring a small-scale examination of communities (see Zorbaugh 1929; Liebow 1967; Suttles 1968;). Chicago ecologists of the 1920s (Park & Burgess 1925) helped develop an understanding that socially homogeneous neighborhoods formed as a result of economic forces that structured a neighborhood based on competition and economic success. However, as others have argued,
there is more to a neighborhood than shared socioeconomic status (Granovetter 1973). The
notion of social capital and network ties is integral to truly analyzing a community. Although
there has never been a clear consensus on what elements comprise a community, three
components have helped define it: consciousness of sentiment and activity, common locality, and
a network of interpersonal ties (Hillery 1955). It is the latter I argue is integral in community
stability, celebration, and success.

Debate around social networks within a neighborhood is still lively. Two primary
messages have emerged from literature: that closed networks can be beneficial for fostering
social capital based on trust (Coleman 1990), and that open social networks with weak ties can
be beneficial for acquiring resources (Granovetter 1973). Here, I find gambling dens to be of
enormous benefit to the community in terms of social and embodied cultural capital through
strong, closed ties.

Cultural capital, first developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1973; 1984), acts as a social relation
whereby resources of knowledge denote power, class, and status. Embodied cultural capital
refers to non-accredited knowledge and dispositions acquired through engagement in a particular
habitus. Through leisure environments, embodied cultural capital is reproduced to reflect middle-
class norms. From a community perspective, an interpretation of Bourdieu’s initial model can be
developed to argue the gambling dens—and the knowledge, taste, and skill in them—create a
small-scale form of cultural capital whose genesis is in the dens but whose power is felt
throughout the community. The value acquired from betting in the dens is largely symbolic; of
course, gambling is an economic transaction by nature, but betting with a bookie is much more
than an economic exchange.
For each of the gambling dens, I created a network interconnectedness profile of the bookie and his bettors (Charts A-K). This allowed me to have a visual of how bettors were connected, if at all, to each other and their bookie. Color symbology is used, both for the lines (representing the type of connection) and for the background (representing the occupation type of each person). In each of the eleven dens, everyone is connected to at least one other person, though it is more common to find 2-4 ties to another. The weakest, or loosest, ties are found in Los Angeles gambling dens. By comparison, Chicago and New York dens have incredibly strong, cohesive ties. I argue this is due to the urban landscape and neighborhood structure of Los Angeles.

The growth of Los Angeles created not a central core in the city, but rather multiple nodes where each nuclei is a growth point (Harris & Ullman 1945). Neighborhoods lack clear boundary lines, as they were never clearly defined it the city’s development. This lack of structure seems to align with residents of the city: there is far less allegiance or pride to a particular community. Because of this malaise, community ties are weaker and residents more transient. Thus, it is not surprising to see weaker network ties in the Los Angeles gambling dens. The downside of these weak ties is that the dens exist under cover, and there is little else bookies provide beside the money line for the game. The social capital provided by the LA bookies is limited at best; a lead on an apartment or job may be offered up, but it is rare. By comparison, social capital was plentiful at the gambling dens in New York and Chicago.

Ties to the community in Los Angeles are insubstantial. Two of the bookies, Paul and Vinny, were also highly mobile, moving from one bar location to another in the neighborhood, which further emphasized the transient nature of the city. Each bookmaker works out of a

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18 There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. Residents living in posh areas such as Bel-Air or Brentwood, for example, take pride in mentioning where they live.

19 In the sixteen months I spent with bookies in Los Angeles, this occurred only twice.
particular neighborhood, but his presence does not extend beyond the four walls. Thus, the bookmaker becomes a broker for a bettor’s fix, while maintaining a low profile in the community. Bettors in Los Angeles use their particular bookie because of convenience, willingness to extend a large credit line, or because it’s familiar, in that order. Jason claimed the only reason he bet with Vinny was because Henry (his roommate) does as well. There is little, if any, emotional bond tying the bettor to the bookie. Nor is there a strong desire to be in the company of that specific bookie. There is, of course, trust between the bookie and bettor, as an exchange of such kind could not exist without it.

For some time, geographers have analyzed embeddedness in terms of its spatial dimensions, such as childcare or job information (Hanson & Pratt 1991). The role of space is key in sculpting how information flows in a neighborhood. For men, social networks can be weaker than women's networks, thus sectioning them off from access to resources. The den helps to ameliorate the weakened ties by creating a strong place-based network. This is particularly crucial for working-class men in terms of job opportunities. The series of network interconnectedness maps in Appendix B show these ties and networks for the bettors.

Race, class, and sex all intersect, and this is not an exception in the gambling dens. Network ties are hierarchized in each space, though there is no blueprint for how these network ties operate. Patterns do emerge, however, and it is most clear with the bookies in New York and Chicago. Being from the neighborhood is by far the most embedded tie. To be from the neighborhood is to have grown up in the neighborhood, not simply to live in it now. The distinction is clear in the West Town, Park Slope, Bay Ridge, and Montclare gambling dens. Among the bookies in these locations, there was a strong obligation to help those from the community. As well, outsider bettors had easier access if they had someone from the
neighborhood vouch for them. In Park Slope, Sal had stronger ties with men from the neighborhood than he did with those of the same ethnicity. The same was true for Frank in West Town. Despite both having solid Italian pride, concern for those from the neighborhood superseded concern for inter-ethnic group members. As both of these communities undergo gentrification and displacement, it is no wonder their allegiance to, and protection of, a resident is high. In New City, Freddie's network ties were embedded most in the in-race group and neighborhood group. Those who were African American, though ridden the hardest, were given the most opportunities in terms of job connections or housing opportunities. Freddie was consistent in offering advice and possibilities to those within the African American group.

At The Cabin in Lincoln Square, ethnicity is the dominant marker for network ties. Oscar prioritized Filipinos above all others. From a network standpoint, he is more committed to the Old-Schoolers than the kids, but as a businessman, he grosses more income from the kids. This is in part due to the services he can provide for them (drugs, high stakes table games).

In Jefferson Park, Lucas valued work above all else. While he created ties for those of the same ethnic group (Polish) and those from the neighborhood, he provided the most for the working-class men. Having worked in shipping in high school, and then at a steel factory on the northwest side of Chicago, he possessed a strong working-class consciousness. Lucas respected skilled and semi-skilled manual labor, and saw it as a mark of one's character, not a mark against a man. His willingness to provide extended credit, employment opportunities, and neighborhood resources was most spirited for the working-class men. Lucas was of the mindset that the more satisfied they are with work and home, the more able and willing they will be to stay in the neighborhood. Lucas wanted to see Jefferson Park maintain its class background. Space differs by each neighborhood, and thus ethnics' consumption of space is marked in different ways. For
white ethnic males, the desire to consume outside the home was limited by available spaces to consume.

While Yancey (1971) and Fried (1963) found working-class groups to have the same levels of satisfaction with their neighborhood as middle-class groups, their work was conducted at a time when solidarity was high and the existence of working-class communities was strong. Today, because of labor shifts and displacement, I found working-class men to have lower levels of satisfaction in their neighborhoods compared to middle or upper-class men.

The relationship people have with crime in the community is mediated by their structural position within the community (Walkate 1998). Therefore, in the eyes of community residents, the bookie’s illegal work is negated if he attains a prominent position in the community. The bookmakers of Bay Ridge, Park Slope, Chinatown, West Town, Lincoln Square, Jefferson Park, and New City were long-term, stable members of the community. They provided goods that extended outside the scope of the betting den; this minimized underground enterprises and fortified resource enterprises. The reaction by the community to crime must be understood in the context of whether or not the criminal activity poses a direct hazard to them. Because bookmaking does not produce environmental incivilities—vandalism, abandoned buildings—nor does it create chaos or disruption in the larger community, residents feel little effect of the bookies’ illegal activities.

In New York and Chicago, not only do the bookies play a much larger role in the community, they play a more significant role in the bettors’ lives. In Chicago, four of the five bookies assisted clients in ways other than betting. For Oscar, it was personal loans, visa help, and drugs; for Lucas it was union job connections and housing; for Frank it was personal loans and home repairs; and for Freddie it was job assistance and car maintenance. In New York, Sal
did everything from ensuring trash pick up was timely to shoveling the walkways of elderly residents to grocery runs for the old-timers. These men were heavily embedded in the community and the lives of residents.

The urban neighborhood is comprised of a variety of institutions and resources, both formal and informal. These can foster social networks as well as social disorder. The bookmaker is at once a provider of both positive and negative attributes in the neighborhood; to romanticize the situation would be incorrect, just as would it be to demonize it. Instead, I argue there is a complexity to the underground economy, based on location, socioeconomic status, and other resources available to the community as a whole.

Since the 1960s, one of the most important works on community life was from Wellman and Leighton, who helped redefine the social network approach for communities (1975). They argued if a community could not be found locally, it could be one of three: community-lost, community-saved, or community-liberated. Not all dens can be categorized in the same way, and it is most clear in the divisions based on city. From my research, the neighborhoods of the Los Angeles dens can best be described as community-liberated: their tie to the neighborhood, if available, is only one of the multiple networks they possess. There is also little structural basis and loose boundaries. By contrast, the neighborhoods of New York and Chicago dens fulfill community-saved. Much of the network ties are strong, and the densely knit networks cluster tightly to provide assistance to members.

A HELPING HAND

The bookie can be a source of informal resources. Resources can be defined as a good (either symbolic or material) that benefits a person (Small 2006). The bookie provides both information and service resources to the community.
In addition to table games and sports betting, Oscar also gave out loans and lines of credit to the players. This was for sports betting as well as private loans for personal needs of the players. From my observations, personal needs range from paying one’s cell phone bill to helping buy one’s kid’s schoolbooks to paying for a boot to get removed from one’s car. The latter was a frequent occurrence at The Cabin because the majority of parking is street permit and players do not generally have permits.

For the tile and card games, Oscar takes a straight percentage of 10% of the winnings. For the loans, however, the interest rate ranged from 10-35% depending on the reason and the person. Old-Schoolers received lower rates than did the Kids because, as Oscar put it, ‘They’re spending it on shit. They don’t know how to handle their money. So this is their lesson.’

In addition to the above services, The Cabin offers another service of match making. Over the course of my observations, I frequently heard a visitor or guest speak of a relative in the Philippines whom they wished to be here but couldn’t legally get a green card or visa. The implication, of course, was to see if any of the players had family members who were willing to marry this individual so they could legally come to the U.S.. According to Eddie, one of the regular gamblers, this was a very common practice and analogous to prostitution. This is compounded by the fact that the Filipino culture is patriarchal and the majority of women who enter into these relationships are often abused, both financially and physically.

‘The person who lends out their family member can get repaid in a lotta ways, but most it’s just through money. Lots of money over time. They’re fucking pimps,’ he said. Jonah, only 25, had been asked the week prior if he would consider this arrangement with Jordan’s sister-in-law.
Since many people in the community who do not visit The Cabin know about its existence, keeping the larger community happy is necessary. From my observations, this entailed offering services other than gambling to the rest of the community such as private loans and, very rarely, security. In a few instances, non-gamblers would complain about people harassing them (a local high school had a few gang-bangers causing trouble in alleys by tagging garages and breaking fences). Oscar was called to take care of this problem with a group of regulars.20

What also appears to make the larger community happy is that The Cabin is not merely a gambling house, but is one where old, traditional, cultural rules and values dominate. While many people do not visit The Cabin, they are familiar with the mores and folkways that regulate this place. As one church-goer put it ‘I don't go there, but it’s not because I can't...I'm old, so I know that they would treat me with respect there.’

There are very clear roots within the community, and the thickness of The Cabin kept it alive. This attachment stems primarily from the fact that it is an ethnic enclave for Filipinos on the North Side of Chicago, and it is a location where familiar cultural rituals take place. The Cabin fills a role as a third space, a blending of spaces between work and home, making it a vital fixture within Lincoln Square and immune to much internal or external regulation.

Similarly, in Bay Ridge, James provides informal resources. ‘I’m here all the time and I know most of the guys...what they need. Not just bets, but who’s looking for a way into the union, who got laid off, who’s getting married, who’s looking to move out of their place. I listen to everything that’s going on. It’s not part of the job, but if Michael comes in complaining about his landlord, I can tell him Tommy’s looking to rent out his top floor. I put at least 10 guys over

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20 I was never privy to how these nuisances were handled. I tried to ask Matthew about it, but he said his father just takes care of things.
the years in with Sanitations because of the hookup from my dad. I’ve vouched for guys looking to get in the Local 3.\textsuperscript{21}

While James is not a neighborhood institution per say, he does play a key role in providing information and resources to other members of the community, particularly in the way of job placement. Though not necessarily a man of power, he wields respect from those in the community; thus, he can ‘vouch’ for someone and have it mean something. While he may not be able to afford it (James lives in a one bedroom near Ovington and 3rd Ave), he can give a tip to a young professional who is looking to buy a condo on Shore Road.

In Chinatown, Pete’s business extended well beyond placing bets. His community area, compared to older immigrant groups’, was thriving. Chinese immigrants in New York, at 350,200 or 11.4%, are the city’s second largest immigrant group having grown 34% in the first decade of 2000. Many settle in Queens and Brooklyn, but Manhattan’s Chinatown is also a place to call home for both new arrivals and the second generation. While the men have a desire to bet, they also have other needs which Pete attempts to fill: job placement and housing demands. Pete’s brother works at a realty company in Chinatown, which allows him to provide services to the men. In the den, there is a wall dedicated to such services: apartments are tacked up the second they go on the market, and rarely does one sheet of paper stay up for more than two weeks. While the postings were almost always in Cantonese, Pete said now they are in Mandarin as well, accounting for the change in demographics. His cousin is also a major importer of jewelry from China, having a shop along Canal Street, and Pete frequently sends men there to get a good deal. Strong network ties in Chinatown for Pete are a necessity; the better the men are doing financially, the more money they will spend in the den. He is a savvy businessman,

\textsuperscript{21} The Local 3 is the Electrician’s Union.
knowing that without a steady stream of money coming in to the men’s pockets, there is no flow of money going in to his.

Of the eleven gambling dens, seven were located in communities where residents perceived low levels of risk and violence. These communities had strong levels of self-policing, and insider versus outsider status codes. Residents in these communities were willing to accept the presence of certain criminal activity as long as they felt it: 1-could be beneficial to the community; 2-felt there was a moralistic code to said activity. The perception and potential benefits of criminal activity within a community has been well-examined (Hartnagel 1979; Walkate 1998). How people perceive danger in their environment is strongly associated with the level of personal integration they have in networks (Yancey 1971). From my assessment, men who were strongly tied into the gambling den felt the lowest level of hazards in the community at large. Those only loosely associated were more aware of potential risks and dangers in the community. This was noticeable in North Hollywood, where network interconnectedness was weak. Chuck commented on the gang presence in the neighborhood on more than one occasion, noting that he didn’t feel safe parking his car for too long on the street. When he stepped outside for a cigarette, he would check on the car to make sure it wasn’t stripped. While North Hollywood does have crime ranging from gang violence to prostitution, his perception of crime was higher than other bettors who were more socially integrated into the gambling den.

Because of the bookie’s occupation, there are a number of facets to explore in terms of identity and role. The bookie, at the simplest level, runs an illegal, cash-based business within a designated community. Though client locations vary, the majority (60%) is located within a 1-mile radius. If only New York and Chicago are analyzed, 74% of clients are located within a 1-

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22 Bay Ridge, Park Slope, Jefferson Park, Montclare, West Town, Lincoln Square, and Koreatown. This was done through personal surveys of residents across all communities with a sample size of 70 for each area.
mile radius of their respective gambling den. This reinforces the notion of community, and an identifiable community space. Eight out of the eleven bookies identified as positive forces in their community. The three who did not were all bookies in Los Angeles. This is because there was little notion of a ‘community’ with the Los Angeles bookies; they were located in the neighborhood where they lived, but their reach did not extend beyond the four gambling walls. They saw little reason to extend their network ties outside of those who were placing bets.

Interestingly, their disillusionment with work was significantly higher than the eight bookies who saw themselves as integral to the neighborhood. Amado, Paul, and Vinny all viewed their role as bookie as nothing more than an occupation. This in turn informed how they identified themselves: the three Los Angeles bookies were not only more cognizant of their deviance, but were also more ashamed of it. Vinny was particularly aware of this identity; he felt guilty about what expectation and example he was setting for his son.

‘I’m 22. I’m not a kid, I have a kid. And I’m living with my folks. I spend my days moving the lines to get the most money and wait for my friends to get off work so they can hang out. I’m in the same room I was in when I was 12.’

Vinny lived with his parent in North Hollywood, in a mixed industrial/residential neighborhood. Most of the men he hung out with were his clients, and all but one was employed. His ex-girlfriend and their son lived the other side of the 134 Freeway in Toluca Lake. It was a ten minute drive (in good traffic) yet Vinny only visited two to three times a month. He talked about his son Connor regularly, had photos on his phone of him, and was financially supportive, but felt embarrassed seeing him. At 4 years old, Connor was impressionable and Vinny wanted to have a real job and be a man for him. In his eyes, he wasn’t worthy of Connor’s time or attention because he was a bookie; he equated his work with his self-worth, and that was low.
Vinny’s perception of self and identity were in stark contrast to the New York and Chicago bookies. Identity formed from work was worthy, and many saw themselves as heroes in the den, if not the larger community.

With a desire to re-examine Gans’ Italian-American group cohesiveness, Granovetter undertook extensive work on social networks. Granovetter argued while the Italian American working-class were high in group cohesion, they did not act collectively because they lacked work ties and organizations (Granovetter 1973). Thus, the argument goes the more a community has local bridges, the more likely that community is to be cohesive and thus act in concert. I argue that some bridges are more relevant (and thus more valuable) than others, particularly when individuals are participating in illegal exchanges together. For many of the men in the dens, their work ties were fractured or non-existent. However, their ties to the den, as seen as an organization, allowed them not only a high level of group cohesion, but also a well from which to draw valuable resources they would otherwise not be able to secure in the community.

In my observations of communities, there was often an absence of formal organizations that could tie a locale together. In the five Chicago community sites, three did have a religious organization that linked community members (Lincoln Square, Jefferson Park, and Montclare).

**PRAYING TOGETHER, PLAYING TOGETHER**

Not far from The Cabin is a church that is a social hub for the community. The majority of individuals who play at The Cabin also attend the same church and socialize there once a week after mass.

Although most of my time was spent in Oscar’s gambling den, I frequented the church a half dozen times to observe individuals’ interactions and compare them to their interactions at The Cabin. As well, I spoke with six individuals who did not visit The Cabin but did attend
church so I was able to see what level of integration (or lack thereof) The Cabin had within the larger community.

From the outset, the church appears to be the primary staging area. That is to say, players would briefly meet and speak about the previous week’s transactions. This was rather informal, however, since they were usually with their families. A few would gather around and reminisce about what happened the week past. What was interesting about this practice is it is unnecessary for the next playing session to take place. In other words, a playing night is usually determined by a series of phone calls from certain players to Oscar, and he determines the number of tables or players who should be invited. Thus, this minor congregation is more for players to acknowledge each other’s membership and in-group status while simultaneously showing onlookers and other churchgoers they belong to part of a group.

The interactions after mass in the vestibule of the church look innocuous; it has a joyful party feel to it. Wives often find other wives and talk with each other while they hold their babies while older kids run around. Teenagers sporting the latest trends in clothing meet in the parking lot to talk about their girlfriends or modified Honda Civics. The older men and players assemble and discuss sports, cars, and gambling. The men seem to be in control of when the conversations end and when they are ready for the family to leave.

The individuals who gamble at The Cabin, who find themselves a part of this sub-group and network, do not go to church for the sake of it, even though many of them confirmed and believed themselves to be devout Catholics. Many do not show up on time for church, and often catch resentment and scorn from the priest who addresses the issue after mass.

On top of the church being a staging area for the gamblers to set up their next night or gossip about previous nights, the church is a place to be seen for everyone. From modified
Japanese cars to high-end BMWs, the slow walk to the car and the pulling out of the lot is almost ceremonial and ritualized. People drive slower so as to make sure everyone sees them leave, often times honking to catch anyone’s attention so they know someone has seen them in the car. This fanfare and ritualization is much more subdued at The Cabin.

A few of my interviews took place at the nearby church both before and after mass. One of the questions I consistently asked was whether or not people knew of illegal gambling sites within the area; all responded yes. The women I interviewed at the church all knew about The Cabin, either because one of their family members went there or because they knew someone who knew someone who had been there. Of the six I spoke with, all but one woman expressed positive sentiments. They saw it as a social meeting place rather than a gambling house. One woman, Faith, felt it was not right for grown men to be gambling. Faith appeared to be more realistic and knowledgeable about the situation than the others, and this is perhaps why her viewpoint was distinct. ‘These men shouldn’t be taking their wives’ money and gambling. Why can’t they go out and work too?’ Faith asked irritated. The Cabin was unique from the other gambling dens in two senses. Firstly, the den was a dedicated, multi-gambling space used not just for sports betting but table games. Secondly, the majority of men were unemployed and used their wives’ earnings to gamble. In other dens, this would be seen as a source of shame, not pride.

**GENTRIFIED NEIGHBORHOOD: RESIST OR ADAPT**

My first encounter with James occurred on an unseasonably warm day in January—the sun was out and only a light jacket was necessary. He commented on this immediately as we shook hands at the corner of 5th Avenue near 73rd Street. We sat at the bar, The Bay, where James spent most of his work time, and it showed: our conversation was repeatedly interrupted by
patrons stopping over to say hi, asking James his opinion about an upcoming game, and to place bets. He was known here and he seemed to take pride in my witnessing these interactions.

I met James through the snowball method; a close friend of mine is a heavy gambler on boxing and horses. He was able to direct me to his father, a retired New York City police detective, who lives in Dyker Heights. Artie, in return, put me in contact with two bookies in the neighborhoods of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and Sunset Park, Brooklyn. The lead to the bookie in Sunset Park proved fruitless, but I was able to make a connection with the bookmaker in Bay Ridge. As well, I was introduced to three gamblers at the Bay Ridge Off-Track Betting (OTB) located on 4th near 86th Street.

Although the bar James works out of is located in a neighborhood that is historically Irish, German, and Dutch, I do not want to reminisce and misjudge the patrons of the bar. On the same note, Bay Ridge was, and is, largely middle-class with a strong population of union workers, policemen, and firemen. Despite the fact that this bar caters to some of that population, I do not presume or stereotype the bar as a ‘blue-collar bar’ or ‘a man’s bar.’ Indeed, on the numerous visits I have made, there have been variations of customers from college students to young professionals to retirees. One can expect to find the bar populated with retired cops and union workers during the day, working on pints and talking shop. By 7pm, though, the clients change and the bar fills with professionals who have returned from Manhattan and are looking to unwind a bit. James was attuned to these changes and worked with them rather than resisting. He was amiable to the newcomers and made them feel welcome. By contrast, Sal dug his heels in further each time the neighborhood changed.

I stopped in at the Park Slope coffee shop on my way home from the social club. Sal waved me in as he was the only one there at 8pm.
‘How you doing my dear?’ he asked.

‘Good, good,’ I said. ‘What’s going on over here?’

‘Ah well you know my mother’s in the hospital. She’s having this gall bladder thing. You know we buried my aunt on Sunday and we’re at the restaurant and my mother’s complaining of pains. So we know already to take her to the hospital right away. She’s got stones—she’s had stones for 30 years now—but they went into the gall bladder and they gotta take them out. So either tomorrow or Friday they’ll do the surgery. 30 minutes the surgery is. They got a surgical staff and the doctor’s real good. But you know, the past three years she had cancer and then last year she had a heart attack...very mild heart attack. But you know.’

I interject sympathetic moans here and there. We swap our poor family medical history like others swap baseball cards. Sal asks how I’m adjusting and if I’ve visited any of the places on 5th Avenue.

I smirked a little. ‘No, the places on fifth, they’re just…’

‘What? Too far away?’

‘No, no it’s not that. They’re just too expensive. You cross over to 5th then 6th then 7th and it’s so expensive.’

‘Oh hey,’ he says, holding up his left hand. ‘You know that place they’re building on the corner? They’re gonna make it into a fancy coffee shop. I don’t know what they’re thinking. Who’s gonna go over there during the day and spend 5 dollars on a cup of coffee when you can get this (picks up apple turnover) and this (picks up his coffee) for 2 dollars? I mean, none of the construction guys are gonna pay that.’

I nod my head in agreement.
'No, but you know they’re going to be open at night, so maybe that’s when they’ll do well. Supposed to open in April. Originally it was January first, but now it’s looking like April. And they’re gonna have big outdoor seating to drink the fancy coffee so maybe people will want to go to that. But there’s no way he can charge 75 cents for coffee like we do because-hey-with the rent and stuff, ahh.’ Sal gestures with hand to dismiss it.

I began to wonder in my head how a coffee shop would be able to pay that rent. The space is sizable and I could not imagine lattes can cover the growing rent prices.

‘Ah, but what are you gonna do? I just hope that guy realizes he’s not gonna get customers during the day. Everyone comes in here, all my friends and stuff. The owner of that place came in a while back and got this (picks up turnover) and a coffee and I charged him 4 bucks. Because hey, you know, why not show him what it’s gonna be like, you know?’ Sal puffed his chest up a bit, his thick fingers leaning on the glass counter. He seemed satisfied with himself, but fully aware the new business was just one in a string of changes taking place in the neighborhood. He was becoming the anomaly in a neighborhood that had, forty years back, crowned him king.

Both Brooklyn neighborhoods, Bay Ridge and Park Slope, have seen transformations in ethnic and economic composition. The working-class roots of both communities are strong, though now are more symbolic than reality. While James adapted to the neighborhood, Sal was hesitant to conform, struggling to retain a sense of power. His area grew smaller, his clients dwindled, and he resisted the entire way. Desperate to keep things the way they were, he struggled with his business, wary of outsiders and newcomers.

A SHADE DARKER, THE SAME GAMBLE
Johnny in Montclare offered his clients strictly sports betting services. The most popular at the Blue Horn were: European football (soccer), Boxing, American football, Basketball, Baseball, and Hockey. Approximately 65% of his book was European football. In part, this was because the season lasted almost 10 months compared to American football which is a short season (17 weeks). The other reason the majority of betting was for soccer was due to his clientele; most were European, if not in origin then in ancestry, and more specifically Italian and Polish. Those who weren’t of European descent were Mexican, a group also known for their love of and devotion to soccer.

‘I’m a little browner. They’re a little greasier. We do the same shit though,’ Hector explained to me at The Pinot. ‘I got Ronan eating tacos now,’ he said laughing.

The demographic changes in the Montclare community in the past three decades have largely been ethnic related. Home values and median household income have fluctuated very little, thus presenting the area as fairly stable economically. The transition that has taken place has been the decrease of Italians and increase of Mexicans. Streets which once catered to an exclusively Italian market have changed ownership; now, they are shared spaces with Mexican markets.

What I call a ‘white ethnic squeeze’ has taken place in many urban communities, Montclare included, across the country. In the same way the ‘wage squeeze’ has, in the past three decades, decreased living wage jobs, so too have urban communities ‘squeezed’ out white ethnics. This is not sinister, nor an accusation; as in many historically Italian ethnic enclaves, the well has simply dried up. Migration from Italy slowed by the 1960s, and there were no new generations to keep the neighborhood alive. Second and third generation Italians moved out of the neighborhoods they grew up in—either to the suburban, outlying areas or to more well-to-do
neighborhoods in the city. Because there was no one to take over when the previous generation passed, the store closed, the house was sold, and the church held mass in a different language. The same held true for other Western European immigrant groups. In sheer numbers, across all three cities, groups from Asia and Central and South America were replacing traditional European immigrant groups. One only needs to walk through Little Italy in Manhattan to see how little space is left. Chinatown’s encroachment of the once-thriving ethnic enclave is not a blame game, but a reality of changing immigration patterns. Pete told me he likes how much Chinatown has grown, as it allowed for an even larger pool to skim from.

‘I feel bad sometimes for them. They don’t have anyone left coming. You see Mulberry Street and it’s -- it’s like a ghost. There’re no I-talians there. There’re white people but they’re not talking in Italian or anything. So we need the space and we can take the space and be okay,’ Pete said. Pete was pragmatic about the community; he wasn’t demonstrative or boastful, but rather believed this is how things went. People come over, they need space, they find space; people stop coming over and they don’t need space. This belief was not racially motivated in any way but an honest reflection of shifting immigration patterns in New York.

It would be easy to pigeonhole the gambling establishment as one thing for one type of people, but it would be fictitious. A neighborhood tavern can have incredible significance not just to individuals, but also to the community as a whole. To me, part of James’ bar’s longevity, as well as his longevity at the bar, is the fact that it has learned to work around the neighborhood’s changes. The bar does not tout itself as a working-class bar, nor does it claim to be a hot spot. Rather, it is conscious of the neighborhood. During the day, the only channel on the television is ESPN. At night, the TV is often turned off and the jukebox, playing mainly 80s hits, blasts out song after song. On the weekends, drink specials are offered. James is aware of
the changing neighborhood as well. He is rarely present at night because his client base does not exist among the young professionals. On the weekends, he will stop by during the late afternoon for a couple hours to do business with union workers who stop in around 3pm. The union workers, according to James, only place bets on boxing and football. The retired cops and firemen usually spread their bets out a little more, taking on hockey and “any playoff or championship game.” He also has a small (approximately 6) base of retirees who bet only on soccer. Even though there are lulls in work, James is covered year-round by the diversity of sporting events.

‘I don’t have to go out hustling because I can take care of everything here. When I first started, I only did boxing because you have to learn how to do it. Boxing only has a certain amount of fights per year, so you’re not running around everyday like during football season. I had to make sure these guys knew they could trust me. If you don’t show up when you say you will or you don’t pay out when you say, you’re gonna lose your guys pretty fast. They all talk and they’re not about to get suckered…these are not guys who’ll walk away from getting stiffed. I grew up with some of these guys, but that doesn’t mean anything when money’s involved. So the first year, I was a bar back here and I ran boxing. I was 22 and made sure I was at the bar all the time.’

**BEING PRESENT IN THE COMMUNITY**

All of the eleven bookies I worked with lived in the neighborhood they worked. This was important for a variety of reasons, chiefly because it created a consistent presence in the community. The men were stable fixtures the bettors could rely on; even when they weren’t at the den, bettors knew they were only a short walk away or at another location in the neighborhood. This also meant there was no escaping the bookies; if you lived where you bet,
you could only dodge payment for so long before being spotted. The majority (9 out of 11) grew up in the neighborhood they now worked in. Therefore, there was multi-generational knowledge of not just the community but also the residents. While in many ways this helped build the trust required to run an illegal betting operation, it did not guarantee success.

James’ entrance into becoming a bookie, and building clients, was not done in a cavalier manner. He was aware that being known as a resident in the neighborhood was one thing and being known in the neighborhood as a businessman was a completely different thing. While he may have been given certain allowances (his father was a retired Sanitations union worker who frequented the bar), he needed to prove himself reliable. His dedication to his work and his clients helped foster strong levels of trust; James was arguably the most reliable of all the bookies I worked with throughout my time in the dens.
Chapter 4: Your Labor, Your Loss: Class at Work

REMEMBRANCE OF CLASS PAST

Like Goffman, my interest lies not in the way a particular bettor behaves, but the interactions between him and the social group. Identities taken on at the den can be patently different than those outside of the den. The men must carefully craft the codes of conduct and traits valued inside in order to attain status. These values are specific to the den and, in fact, in contrast to larger society.

The notion of a working-class community has been heavily studied in the field of urban sociology, with much of the past research eagerly presenting neighborhoods as homogeneous in class and cohesive in nature (Bott 1957; Gans 1962). The decades-old debate of the reality of a ‘working-class’ and the idea of a ‘community’ continues still today. Some now believe they may have been overzealous in observing class uniformity (Moore 1975; Cousins & Brown 1975), as even when working-class communities thrived, there were still fractions within these groups. Today, the concept of a working-class community is even more difficult to pin down, given the larger structural-economic forces that have changed over the past forty years. I argue, however, that the working-class community very much exists in cities, if only in the minds and collective memories of the residents.

During his visit across America, Rudyard Kipling wrote, “I have struck a city—a real city—and they call it Chicago…Having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again.” By 1893, over three-quarters of Chicago residents were of foreign parentage. The Windy City was born of immigrants and spent its youth knee-deep in animal carcass. By adolescence, it took pride in being the most corrupt city in the country with a notorious vice district protected by

23 American Notes, Chapter 5, 1891.
In adulthood, Chicago matured and diversified its portfolio, but it remained a bipolar city. It was at once frightful and a wonderland, depending on who you asked.

In the 1960s, as tear gas blasted into crowds of protestors while America looked on, there was a whole separate Chicago hidden from the spotlight. Tim, Lucas’ older brother, remembers the 1960s well even though he was only a child.

‘I remember hearing about all these protestors, you know, hippie types, at the Convention. Cops were on alert, Daley had warned them. And even though it was happening just downtown, it was a totally different world. These kids who were protesting had money, college types. The people I knew were working, they didn’t have the luxury of taking time off to complain.’ Many bettors who were old enough to remember the ’68 Democratic National Convention shared similar feelings, and just as many were on the side of the policemen. They saw the protestors as the bourgeoisie, perched in elite towers, and acting as troublemakers.24

Because of the historical development of the city, and of its geographic location in the country, Chicago was built as a heavy manufacturing zone: the famous Pullman railroad cars, the Union Stock Yards, and the McCormick reaper factory all contributed to tens of thousands of blue-collar occupations. The steady flow of immigration from Europe, as well as national migration due to job prospects, swelled the city’s population to 3 million persons by 1930. It is no wonder Chicago became a sociological playground for researchers in the early twentieth century.

However, from 1950 to 1960, population declined for the first time in history. Factory jobs left the city, white flight catapulted thousands into the surrounding suburbs, and massive housing projects were erected to contain the poor and African American populations. The

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24 This is, of course, perception. Protestors varied in education, race, and income.
Chicago Democratic Convention of 1968 was emblematic of the city’s dichotomy: young versus old, blue versus white collar, White versus non-White.

Of the 127 bettors I worked with in Chicago only 48 of them were alive in 1960. The bulk was born in the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, they grew up after the city had lost much of its blue-collar and working-class occupations. Yet the majority of bettors still held on to a working-class consciousness and belief in a working-class neighborhood, even if it was largely symbolic. Most factories closed or relocated by the 1970s, and by the 1990s, the city had reinvented itself in an attempt to wash away the stain of tremendous gang violence, bloodshed, embedded poverty, and the crack cocaine epidemic. With a new Daley\textsuperscript{25} at the city’s helm, Chicago undertook a ‘beautification’ process by planting trees and flowers along streets, coaxed mega-companies such as Boeing and MillerCoors to have their headquarters located in the city, and revitalized the downtown neighborhood known as The Loop, spending $475 million to create Millennium Park.\textsuperscript{26}

The city sanitized itself, making it safe for young, white, urban professionals to reside in the city. Many of the bettors saw this new group, and the changes to the city, as an invasion, much as their families had been seen when they came from Poland, Italy, Ireland, and the Ukraine. For the bettors, this wasn’t about an ethnic or racial intrusion, but a class annexation. In the Montclare community, Johnny and his bettors felt protected from the takeover because they were on the far West Side. Similar sentiments were held by Freddie and locals in New City; they were still too “South” for most new residents’ liking and they weren’t fashionably White-Irish like the South Side Bridgeport community.

\textsuperscript{25} Richard M. Daley, son of former Mayor Richard J. Daley.
\textsuperscript{26} The cost of the Park came from city taxpayers ($205 million) and private donors ($270 million).
Eddie, a long-time resident of New City explained to me why the neighborhood is still isolated. ‘These little bitches too scared to come down here. They go down far as to Roosevelt for the dinosaurs.’ Or they come whizzing past us on St. Patrick’s day so they can have an excuse to flash their tits and puke on someone’s lawn.  

His resentment towards the city’s ignorance of the community is palpable, but there is also a hurtful sentiment in his words. The mass revitalization that occurred in the city was slotted for certain neighborhoods, and New City wasn’t one of them. In Eddie’s eyes, the city had turned its back on the community, despite the fact that it was his community whose back Chicago was built on a century ago.

For West Town, Lincoln Square, and Jefferson Park, invasion was inevitable. Jefferson Park is centrally located off the Blue Line, with direct connection to O’Hare Airport and The Loop; Lincoln Square is on the North Side bordering North Center, Uptown, and nearby Lakeview communities; and West Town is a stone’s throw from The Loop and Near North communities, both of which are heavily commercial. Jefferson Park’s saving grace was the strong owner-occupied housing, mainly from police and fire persons. Still, bettors of the community believed gentrification had taken hold. For these communities, and for the residents who had grown up in the area, it wasn’t just a fear of change; it was a fear housing costs would rise and they would be displaced.

As many had grown up in the areas, the new populations entering were unfamiliar, as were the shops and restaurants that now catered to them. Aleksander and Johnny often reflected on the neighborhood changes, noting with some bitterness that ‘their people’ were no longer

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27 The Field Museum is located 2 blocks south of the Roosevelt red line stop.
28 The South Side Irish Parade in Bridgeport is notorious for debauchery, so much so that it was cancelled from 2010-2012.
29 Chicago Police and Fire persons are required to live within the city limits; many settled in Jefferson Park because it is still within the borders but far enough away from the dense inner-city areas.
around. Older bettors would agree, commenting on not knowing their neighbors or being unable to rely on other residents as they had before. In part, there is a strong factor here, as described by Gans (1962), whereby a coloring of memories occurs where people collectively recall past times. There are robust convictions held by the older bettors in the neighborhoods that local life was better in the past, and the changes that have occurred have created more harm than good.

In West Town, gentrification has revitalized Ashland Ave, a major commercial strip; today there are small markets, clothing shops, and restaurants in spaces where, a decade ago, store fronts sat vacant and unused. Yet, the older bettors have grievances with these changes, often complaining that these stores are not ‘for them.’ Much like Blokland’s work in the Hillesluis community, bettors couldn’t put their finger on what was lost in the community, but felt it had ‘just changed.’ (Blokland 2001 p. 274). This profoundly influenced the divisions among the bettors in these communities; old versus new residents, rather than race or class, bisected the men. Frank’s two closest clients in the den were African American; both had grown up in the neighborhood. One was either included in the shared collective memory of the neighborhood, or one was excluded, and this played a significant role in ascribing status to a bettor. It was not just nostalgia that reinforced community ties, but nostalgia that armor-plated outsiders and exclusion.

During conversations about the ‘old neighborhood,’ if a younger bettor offered up a thought as contribution, it was dismissed immediately with ‘you don’t know’ or ‘you weren’t around to remember.’ Though all did it to some extent, Frank, Johnny, and Freddie were the guiltiest of trusting bettors based on long-term residency. The bookies saw it almost as a responsibility to bring into the fold and protect stable residents. This was detrimental to them
financially at times, as they were more willing to let payments slide or accrue even when it reached thousands of dollars.\(^{30}\)

FRACTURING

It is important to distinguish between economics and status. An individual or group’s wealth dictates the former, while the latter is governed by prestige and social estimation (Runciman 1966). Even within class, status groups emerge to create distinctions within the classes. Thus, the notion of a unified working-class is not precise. Within the working-class, certain members wield differing levels of authority that in turn informs social rank. For the gambling dens, the bookie is the key authority figure who not only commands obedience but also prestige and deference (Béteille 1996). He, in each of the dens, is at the top of the status hierarchy. From there, working-class members of the den are ranked by masculinity levels, occupational type (skilled versus unskilled labor), and heteronormative standards (sexual promiscuity and attainment). Following this group are the middle and upper class bettors who must consistently perform and conform to normative working-class standards to achieve any status in the dens. In West Town, this is especially salient as gentrification of the neighborhood created a bifurcation of old and new (working and upper-middle) groups.

The idea of a working-class culture has been explored in past research (Bott 1957, Hoggart 1957). Most urban research until the 1960s argued urban neighborhoods are homogeneous in class and closely-knit in their relationships. Those in working-class communities had their own culture and, because of their industry, were concentrated in solitary communities, isolated from the larger society (Lockwood 1975). Since then, sociologists have been critical of this explanation, debating as to whether or not there is a “working-class culture”

\(^{30}\) Benny had racked up a $10,000 debt to Freddie, which could have been much less if Freddie had put his foot down early on. He hadn’t out of a sense of loyalty to Benny, and it cost him.
that is homogeneous, and arguing that other factors (such as religion) led to less harmonious neighborhoods (Devine 1992, Scherzer 1992). Here, I argue while there is not a homogeneous working-class culture, there is a symbolic working-class culture that embeds men into a solitary community at the den. While communities are no longer concentrated by industry type, the den as a third space now performs the role of celebrating class-consciousness.

Concepts of working-class formations in urban settings are fragmented at best, given the modes of gentrification that have occurred in various urban neighborhoods. No longer does industry prevail; there has been a shift from actual manual labor to symbolic labor of strength. As manufacturing has become as distant a memory as smoke stacks in Chicago, the blue-collar identity remains as powerful and real as ever among Chicago’s working-class community. All that remains are facades of buildings, hallow and decrepit, remembrances of the past when the construction of the city rested on the shoulders of immigrants. Yet the men hold on tightly to the memories and attempt to construct their daily lives through these images.

As Vaaranen (2004) and others have argued, the working-class, rather than recognizing or feeling exclusion from other classes, celebrate their exclusion and create ‘a room of his own.’ This class creates cultural performances whereby their class status is reproduced as an emotional experience. It is what Hall and Jefferson (1976) have called ‘resistance through rituals.’ By resisting through the ritual of sports betting, the men reproduce and honor their working-class. The gambling den is one such place where the cultural performance of a working-class identity is not only performed, but also celebrated. While I do not disagree there are sectors of life which the working-class experience inequality and lost opportunities (Vaaranen 2004), I think it is because of these other sectors that the gambling den is so strong in its celebration of the working-class. Whether real or dreamt up, bookmaking has historically been linked to a
working-class ‘type.’ Even when the mafia was in full control and raking in millions of dollars, there was something inherently working-class about the act of sports betting.

**WHAT MATTERS IN THE DEN**

The role culture plays in the reproduction of social class has been well researched (Vaaranen 2004). For the working-class, cultural performances can take on an emotional experience, and rather than feel excluded, they can celebrate their own space. The betting den provides such a space to celebrate the working-class. The experience in the gambling dens, for many of the men, is their search for respect. Having lost autonomy in the workplace, living wages, and community cohesion, the gambling den minimizes this inequality and downplays the opportunities lost. The bettors take hold of the symbolic capital procured from sports betting and reaffirm their masculinity. The association between corporeal masculinity and risk has been well examined (Monaghan 2002; Lyng 2009). Betting, particularly illegal sports betting, is a high-risk leisure activity, and valued seriously among the working-class. In the betting dens, it is the working-class consciousness that reigns supreme; they have found a space to celebrate their social position. Those who are class outsiders, then, are subject to harder tests to be included.

More so than race or ethnicity, class is a divider in the gambling dens. The depiction of a working-class filled with the pain of unfulfilled dreams and miserable lives (Rubin 1976) has only become more poignant in recent decades. The shift in urban economies from a manufacturing base to a service base leaves little if any dignity in the workplace, particularly for males. Their labor deskilled and social alienation heightened, the den becomes a physical space to reclaim for their people (Form 1983). The hallmark of traditional working-class communities has been ‘occupational communities’ whereby work associations carry into leisure activities (Lockwood 1966). Now that work communities have fractioned off or disappeared completely,
leisure activities have become even more valuable in maintaining working-class communities. Even today, they remain an inward-looking group that further emphasizes a sense of cohesion. In the betting dens, ‘us’ versus ‘them’ takes on multiple layers. Firstly, there is class awareness: ‘us’ is the working-class; ‘them’ is the white-collar, professional, educated class. Then, there is a masculine awareness: ‘us’ is the bodied, labored masculine; ‘them’ is the non-bodied, weaker masculine. The two awarenesses inform and reinforce each other.

As Bourdieu argued, the material economy is driven by the cultural economy; thus, it is the symbolic properties of goods that create distinctions of consumption (Bourdieu 1984). The cultural practice of sports betting is still very much a working-class domain. Therefore, the tastes and habitus of the working class become prioritized over the middle-class's. This is in striking contrast to what many of the bettors felt outside the den. Their class was not dominant, and in fact had become fractured in recent decades, and their marginalization in cities had propelled many to feel ignored. Status for a working-class male was difficult to achieve in today's society, yet in the den, it was their group who controlled the dialogue.

Gambling with a bookie gives status to the working-class men. As status is often achieved through consumption (Veblen 1912; Bourdieu 1984), it is the middle-class who must try to attain status in the dens. They must become deferential to the working-class, or risk losing a place at the table. Sean in West Town often had to defer to Big Paul during discussions regarding money management, despite the fact that Sean worked at the Board of Trade. His skills and knowledge were centered on finances (compared to Big Paul who was a former bricklayer). When Sean tried to offer stock advice or portfolio expansion to another bettor, Big Paul would shut it down and tell them to keep it safe in a house or savings account. Sean learned early on to
let Big Paul ‘have it’ and keep his mouth shut; he knew, despite his superior knowledge, it would
hurt him to push his values on the bettors and contest Big Paul’s thoughts.

The gambling den can be viewed as a sacred center in the community, and the men’s
proximity (or distance) to it helps define their status (Lockwood 1992). By proximity, I do not
refer to physical geographic distance, though that must be taken into consideration. Rather,
proximity to the den refers to how closely involved and welcomed a bettor is at the sacred center.
For while the working-class begins at a closer distance, the middle and upper-classes must prove
themselves to achieve that spatial closeness.

GENTRIFY THIS: RESIST AND RETREAT

Since Glass first coined the term gentrification in 1964, it has elicited strong emotions,
most frequently negative ones. As Sassen notes, however,

"Gentrification was initially understood as the rehabilitation of decaying and low-income
housing by middle-class outsiders in central cities...by the early 1980s new scholarship had
developed a far broader meaning of gentrification, linking it with processes of spatial, economic
and social restructuring." (Sassen 1991: 255)

Gentrification has for some time been structured around class oppositions (Smith &
Williams 1986). Of course, with gentrification of a neighborhood comes the physical
displacement of certain labors (Smith 1979). For Chicago and New York, the gambling dens
located in gentrified or gentrifying neighborhood were not neighborhoods of decay, but working-
class, blue-collar communities. As manufacturing bases moved out of the city, labor was
displaced along with residents' feelings of ownership. The bookies and bettors in these
neighborhoods who witnessed or were affected by gentrification had strong feelings of lost
autonomy and ownership. The neighborhood, which they once felt they controlled, now made
them feel as though they were visitors. At the same time, their labor became useless or undervalued. It was only in the den, in the company of their social group, they felt like they once again had control. It was their space with their values reigning supreme. Disempowerment was left at the door, and the den became a conscious coming together of a class.

**A NEIGHBORHOOD DIVIDED**

I met Frank from hearing from my dentist's lawyer who told me the bar had bettors in there all the time, his lawyer apparently being one of them. My first stop at the bar was in late September; I knew there was a heavyweight fight that night of Arreola vs. Garcia and figured there might be action there. The bar is incredibly narrow, holding 4 people deep, though it is longer than it first appears. There are photographs of old Italian stars and historic Chicago pictures across the walls. They’re uneven and crooked, faded yellow, much like the paint behind the pictures are a different color from being there so long. There are only 11 bar stools that cover the L-shaped wood bar and all of them are either wobbly or ripped with yellow foam poking out at the seat. There is one string of Christmas lights that line the wall opposite the bar and they remain on all the time. The only bathroom is unisex that never has toilet paper but instead a roll of brown paper towels. If you walk through the bar towards the bathroom, there is a small alcove to walk through to get to the back room that leads to an exit on the other street. The only light that comes from the street is from two small windows in the front entrance; all other sides of the bar are enclosed. The double door entrance has darkened glass so it is difficult to see much going on. At any time of day, the bar’s lighting is dim and consistent. In the far upper right corner is a lodged 19-inch color TV that looks as though it couldn’t be dislodged no matter how hard you try.
When I arrived at 5:30pm, there was a stool at the end of the bar that I took. There were three other men in the bar all with Buds in front of them. Two of the men looked to be in their late fifties/early sixties, while the third looked in his early twenties. The young one had a construction belt on and his hard hat laid on top of the bar. The bartender, in jeans, black t-shirt, and old Nike sneakers, came over to me. Dropping his palms against the bar, he asked what I wanted. I ordered a drink and asked if he was going to be showing the fight tonight. He paused, squinted at me, and asked what fight I was talking about.

‘The boxing match between Arreola and Garcia,’ I said.

‘You follow boxing?’

‘Yea, but only heavyweight and cruiserweight really. I just can’t get into flyweights, you know, 105-pound guys swinging at each other. I can see that in my neighborhood.’

He chuckled. ‘I’m Tony.’

‘It’s good to meet you. So you gonna put the fight on for me?’

‘Hey, any woman who even knows there’s a fight on can put on whatever she wants on the TV. And yea, we always have to fights on. Give it another hour or so and you won’t be the only one telling me to turn it on,’ he said.

‘Oh yea? That’s good to hear. I hear the over/under is 5.5’ I said.

Tony nodded. ‘Yea, Arreola’s the favorite and I’d go under.’ He put my drink in front of me.

‘You know where I can bet on the line? I hate that online crap,’ I said.

‘You’re one of the few. All the kids your age are buying on that. And they’re running up their credit card and they don’t even know the stats. Fucking squares. Just a rush for them.’

I nodded.
Two men had come in to the bar through the back exit door, which at the time I didn’t realize existed. They sat on the other end of the bar and Tony went over to talk to them. One was white, in his sixties, while the other was African-American and appeared to be in his 40s. One of the men who had come in appeared to know the group of men who had been at the bar. He called to one of them, ‘Hey Paul, where’s your old man these days? I haven’t seen him in weeks.’

The young one, apparently Paul, answered back, ‘He took my mom to Florida last week. He’ll be back this weekend.’

‘No kidding. What the fuck’s he doing going to Florida in September? You go in December so your balls can thaw out from this shit.’

All the guys laughed. One of the older men said, ‘Tom, we’re in mixed company over here,’ and all six pairs of eyes looked over at me.

‘Please. I wouldn’t stress it. I feel the same way in winter. It’s time to get out of Chicago when I can cut glass with my nipples.’

‘Oh! Look at this this one,’ one of them said laughing. They all chuckled. ‘This one’s got a mouth to match Tom! Where you from? I never seen you at the bar before.’

‘From here. I just moved back from Brooklyn though.’

‘No kidding. Well, you’re going to have to stay around for the night. You got anywhere to be?’

‘No, I just wanted to watch the fight tonight. I heard this place has it on,’ I said.

Paul looked over at me, ‘Who do you think’s gonna take it?’

‘Arreola easy. He’ll defend his title easy. I think he’ll KO Garcia by the third round,’ I said.
One of the men who had been quiet the whole time said, ‘What are you kidding? King Kong will put up a bigger fight than that. No way by the third round.’

Tony chimed in, ‘Arreola’s got 21 KO’s—plus he’s got a good ten pounds on Garcia now. He knocked out Hayes in the third round a while back.’

‘Yea, that’s right. Last year. But Hayes was done. Garcia’s still got fight.’ The other men nodded.

The African-American man, who wore a blue-colored button down shirt with a CTA patch on the sleeve, said, ‘And he’s Mexican. All these fucking pee-wee weight Mexicans and this one comes in at 250.’ The men laughed. ‘Seriously, look at all those flyweights and lightweights skinny fucks…they’re all Mexican. Arreola could eat them after a jump rope session.’ At this point, the men are cracking up. ‘For real,’ he said. This banter was common in the den, with the men often humiliating players and taking jabs at their physicality.

Tony grabbed a beer bottle from under the bar, poured a seltzer with lime, and slid them down to Tom and the other man. ‘So who’s got money on the line tonight besides Peeps?’ The guys laughed.

‘Looks like it’s just me so far. But there’s more cause I talked to Frank yesterday and he put out the line on Arreola for 8200.’ the black man, Peeps, said.

Tony nodded over to me and said, ‘So you want to jump in?’

Paul shook his head and said, ‘Frank’s not gonna do it.’

Tom: ‘What the fuck do you know what Frank’s gonna do? Hey- [Tom called to me] you got money to put down? If you want to place a line, just let me know.’

‘I’d like to put $50 on the under if I can,’ I said. ‘But, you know, it’s no big deal. I just really want to see the fight.’
‘Yea, it should be a good one. Frank should be here soon. He had to go meet with his lawyer.’

‘What happened,’ one of the guys asked.

‘Nothing. Just some shit with his house,’ Tom said.

‘He needs to dump that place. It’s cost him more in repairs than it’s worth.’

Paul said, ‘Yea, and that’s with me doing all the work.’ They guys laughed.

The bar had a few more men trickle in, one of whom came in with a middle-aged woman dressed in ripped jean shorts and a tight leopard print top. The conversations fractioned off into small groups while I sat listening. One of the conversations, between Peeps and Tom, was about the CTA raising costs and cutting bus line with the budget crisis. Another conversation, between Paul, Michael, and Al was about the cost of materials and who has the best deals on equipment. The third conversation, which included the woman, revolved around a baptism they were going to on Sunday. Tony weaved in and out between conversations while intuitively keeping the drinks stocked.

An older man shuffled in through the front door. He stopped to say something to the woman, who hit him in the arm and laughed. He then looked over at me, turned away, and continued to walk down the bar. By this point, all the stools were taken at the bar. Paul got up from his seat and said, ‘Hey, Uncle Frank. Sit down for a minute.’ He kissed him on the cheek and shook his hand and Frank sat down. Tony came over to Frank and shook his hand, ‘How you doing?’

‘Ah…my lawyer’s busting my balls and I’ve got to take care of this,’ Frank said shaking his head. The two continued to talk about the house as Tom and Peeps joined in. After fifteen
minutes, the conversation moved to the fight that night. Tony called and waved me over. I got up from the end of the bar and walked towards Frank and the others.

Frank turned towards me on his stool. ‘I hear you’re interested in the fight.’

I nodded. ‘It’s my favorite sport. There’s nothing like it even with all the bullshit and corruption.’

‘Tom said you want $50 on Arreola?’

I nodded. ‘But it depends on what your line is for the over/under.’

Frank smiled. ‘Smart. You know what you want. 240 for under, 200 for over.’

I paused for a minute. ‘I want $50 on the under,’ I said.

‘You’re going to have to give me $50 now. I don’t run credit with random girls. I’ll collect the vig at the end of the fight. That’s only 10%. You have that?’ he asked.

I reached into my pocket and pulled out five tens.

At the West Town Tavern, there were frequent newcomers looking for action. A short distance from the Board of Trade, the tavern became a revolving door for stockbrokers looking to get their fix when the market closed for the day. Though he grumbled often, Frank loved seeing the men come in and attempt to place bets with him. It pleased him to turn them away, even as they tried to offer up a wad of cash. Although there were exceptions, stockbrokers weren’t accepted at the Tavern, and Frank enjoyed the humiliation process he put them through in front of the other men. West Town had such an overspill from the Exchange that it was a constant battle. As more young professionals moved in, Frank grew more bitter. His neighborhood was shrinking, and the men were all who were left. For him, the den, and the exclusion of newcomers, was the last remaining fixture of what was his community.

**A PLACE, A SPACE, A RECLAMATION OF COMMUNITY**
Drawing from England's work on spatial entrapment (1993), I argue the men are a part of these gambling dens in an attempt to reclaim power within their community. While much of the work on spatial entrapment concerns women and occupational segregation (Hanson & Johnston 1985; Hanson & Pratt 1995; Johnston-Anumonwo 1995), little has been said about spatial entrapment as it relates to males. The notion that space and power are linked together and that immobility can equate to powerlessness is not strictly a feminist issue. Much of the discussion heard from the men in the dens was feelings of entrapment in their community. Hardware stores, restaurants, bars, and delis no longer catered to the working-class needs. And because few of them had the resources or time to travel elsewhere, they felt confined to a space. Thus, in the neighborhood they could no longer call their own, and in a society who no longer found their skills of value, the gambling den became a center of rootedness. The concept of rootedness—that persons are bound to a space through personal relationships, emotional ties, and habits of behaviors—can offer people who lack mobility the positive possibilities of a social life (Katz & Monk 1993). The gambling dens allow this spatial boundedness of the men to be a positive force in their social lives. Rather than face immobility and powerlessness, they take on an interconnectedness that enhances the complexity of their networks.

THE HERO IN THE DEN

The link between hero and sports has been well researched (Burstyn 1999; Frey & Eitzen 1991). Many of the bookies saw themselves as the hero, the gatekeeper, to sports. They were the intermediaries, one step closer to the action than the bettors were. They also held the key to men being able to bet on their favorite sporting events, which reinforced this part of their identity. Sport in American culture helps to socialize and reinforce norms and values of society (Snyder 1974; Young 1986). In the gambling dens, the bookie controls and enforces the norms. He does
this by providing a link to the sporting world and the spectators. The hegemonic masculine system is reinforced through sport as a spectacle (Burstyn 1999), and in the dens it is further reinforced, as the men become one step closer to the action. The communities created by the den become a space for social identity to take hold.

Watching a sports event is a shared cultural experience. The center stage is the field, court, or ring. The main actors prepare themselves beforehand by stretching, filling their bodies with proper nutrition, and pep talks. The spectators, too, prepare themselves for the event as they don their team’s colors and pack into the stands. Their bodies as instruments, the athletes perform for their audience, hoping each time they give their best on stage. Social institutions so too engage, as cameras are set up and televisions turned on for the performance.

Performances are mirrored in the den. The men gather in the shared space to take part in the sporting event as well as the betting process. They discuss point spreads, injuries, and new roster lists dissecting the event like a surgeon dissects a clogged artery. Just as there is success and failure on the field, so too are there wins and losses in betting. Men must summon their strength to show emotional coolness towards the outcome. The bookies too, must remain calm and levelheaded, no matter what the result. They must show their strength as impartial judges of the game’s outcome.

Each sport is discussed and viewed differently by the bettors. While boxing and MMA are less popular than NFL and NCAA, they garner the most respect from the men. This is perhaps because, as Wacquant (2004) showed, boxing is individualistic and utilizes only the body as instrument. At the same time, boxing is a collective process forming the “pugilistic habitus.” The same can be said of Mixed Martial Arts where only body is available to defend oneself in the violent ring. The men in the dens are most invested in these sports because there is
a piece of himself in the match. Their bodies are their labor, their instruments of defense in the economic ring, and together they share this collective identity. Much like boxing has fallen out of favor and been replaced by more fashionable sports, so has the working-class male acquired castaway status in society.

For White ethnics, boxing takes on even more significance and nostalgia. Men discuss the days of Ward, La Motta, and Graziano with longing, when the Golden Age of boxing was filled with Great White Hopes. The men are revered for their “strength,” “courage,” and “heart.” The importance of these characteristics is what Early (1994) called “the romance of toughness” (p. 86). It is masculinity at its finest, and the men applaud the days when ‘their’ people dominated the sporting sphere.

Finn got into an argument one afternoon with Freddie. Finn brought up the fight between Klitschko v. Thompson that had occurred back in July, noting that Thompson was a monkey who couldn’t find his way around the ring. The fight was held at the aptly named ‘Color Line Arena’ in Hamburg, and the Ukrainian knocked out the African American in the 11th round. Freddie snapped back saying if it hadn’t been for Klitschko falling over Thompson and hurting his knee, Thompson would have held on.

‘Is that what you think? You gotta make excuses for your guy? What kind of nickname is Tony the Tiger anyway?’ Finn asked. ‘Is he a fucking cartoon character?’ Finn kept pushing, claiming Klitschko showed perseverance and strength and never backed down. He implied Thompson’s knee was an excuse and thus he wasn’t showing toughness. The racial tension of the fight, and the argument among the men, circled around Finn’s attempt to assert Klitschko’s domination through ‘heart’ over Thompson’s natural athleticism. This is a common pattern of dialogue among the men, as Cooley (2010) has noted, whereby Whites are portrayed as less-
skilled than African American athletes but make up for it with determination, courage, and, most important, respectability.

THE THICKNESS OF THE DENs

Within the community of Lincoln Square is the neighborhood Budlong Woods located on the North Side of Chicago. Though it occupies less than 10 city blocks, it is a vibrant Filipino enclave. Karaoke bars, halo-halo treats, and lumpias can all be found in the area. The neighborhood is comprised of working- to middle-class Koreans, Filipinos, and a small group of Orthodox Jews.

Budlong Woods is a tight-knit Asian community, and my permission to enter came from teaching a Sociology of Gambling course. One of my student's father owned and operated The Cabin. He spoke to me about it after class, and asked if I would like to come by to see the action. I said yes, and the following Saturday night, I found myself standing in front of a two-flat brick apartment building.

I text my student Matthew to let him know I was outside the address he gave me. A few minutes later, he appeared next to me, having come from the alley. Matthew escorted me through the alley and into the back entranceway. It was a large metal door with no handle on the outside. He had wedged a piece of plywood in the door to prop it open. In near darkness, we went down a flight of metal stairs that led to the basement. I slowly scanned the room, my eyes adjusting to the fluorescent lights and loud laughter. At least fifty people were spread out at different tables in the basement. It was a large space able to hold 4 mahjong tables, 2 tong-its tables, 31 4 poker tables, as well as a bar and seating area.

Although I was the only non-Asian person in the basement and was certain everyone was going to stare, no one even blinked. Everyone was engrossed in a game, in a drink, or the

31 Tong-its is a type of rummy game popular among Filipinos.
television. I was introduced to Matthew's father Oscar and his girlfriend Jayne. Jayne lives on the second (top) floor of the building and is listed as the owner of the building. This, I was told, was for protection and tax purposes. They greeted me kindly and Oscar then pulled Matthew to the bar to talk.

I stood looking at Jayne for a few seconds in silence. There was plenty of noise coming from the players, but the quiet between us was deafening. I asked how long she had known Oscar and she said fourteen years. She was wearing tall open toe stilettos that were shiny leopard print. Her dress matched in print and was long-sleeved and very tight. She shifted from right to left foot as we talked about where she gets her nails done. Jayne told me she knows how to do nails, and works at a salon four blocks away. Later, when I asked Matthew about this, he informed me his father bought the salon for her so she had somewhere to go during the day.

When Matthew returned from speaking with Oscar, we began to walk through the room, navigating our way around each table. The basement area is approximately 40 by 60 square feet. It is sparsely decorated with only a few plants and vases. Covering the ceiling are fluorescent tubes that emit an odd glow and low buzzing sound. In most areas, the floor is an aged linoleum lined with shoe tracks and drink stains. The office and a few corner areas have carpeting, which gives the basement a disjointed look.

One of the first things I noticed which struck me as odd was no one was smoking. When I asked Matthew why, he told me his father doesn’t smoke and therefore doesn’t allow smoking. Almost all of the players smoke, which means they have to walk upstairs and head outside to the small wooden deck to have a cigarette. If you stand near the stairs, you can hear consistent grumbling in Tagalog as men heave themselves up each step.
The two rooms off the main gambling area are the bathroom and office. The office is where Oscar keeps track of transactions, money, and miscellaneous items such as extra mahjong tiles and cards. There is a safe in the office as well, one of the three he has on the property. Bets are usually taken in this room, whether it is actually paying up, paying out, or keeping track of the books.

The betting options available at The Cabin are tailored to the demographics of the players. Mahjong is a tile game similar to bridge. Chinese in origin, the Mahjong game played at The Cabin is a version from the Philippines. Without a doubt, it is the most popular game in the establishment. However, the money won is rather small in comparison to other betting games because there is only one main round of betting and each individual game can go on for a long period of time.

Sports betting is quite popular as well, and is where Oscar makes most of his cut. Almost all bets taken are for MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) and Boxing matches. That said, according to Oscar, the Super Bowl has become a huge deal at The Cabin. ‘Manny Pacquiao has been fucking us up. Man, Filipinos don't bet against him! So now football.’ Oscar explained to me angrily.

Manny Pacquiao is a famous Filipino boxer who holds four Boxing Championship belts. National pride combined with his undeniable skill makes him a popular person to bet on, but not against. Therefore, the majority of straight bets that occur are slightly decreased since no one bets against Manny at The Cabin.

Instead, players bet on the type of victory and the round he will win. This could be Total Knock Out (TKO), Knock Out (KO), Unanimous, or Split Decision. Although all of the gamblers bet on Pacquiao to win, I repeatedly heard players complain the fight was "cooked." That is, the fight was fixed so that Manny was paid not to knock out his opponent as fast or at all.
Most of the people I spoke with took my questions half-heartedly; many thought it was a joke or not really valid. This worked in my favor, however, as they appeared not to be concerned with masking the truth. My status as outsider in The Cabin was two-fold: I was a woman and I was non-Asian. Of all the dens, this was the most exclusive in terms of ethnicity. The thickness of the den provided incredible cohesion and unshared space.

In Montclare, thickness formed in the shape of neighborhood identity. I met Johnny through a friend of mine from my old neighborhood in Chicago who used to place bets frequently with Johnny back in the 1990s. From what he told me, Johnny had been running the books in Montclare since 1968 when he was sixteen and showed no signs of slowing down. His clientele were loyal, steady, and, in my friend’s words, ‘rough.’ Of all the bookies I met and got to know, Johnny’s business was by far the largest and most comprehensive. While I was able to know about 27 of the men, it was a small fraction of Johnny’s business. Although his business was expansive, few were actually welcomed into Johnny’s circle. He drew lines between work and friends, family and associates, and there were rules that followed these lines. On more than one occasion, I witnessed a client attempt to reach too far in requests or demands; it cost them not just in money, but also in respect.

I drove over to the social club with my friend, Joe. It was a cooler day for August in Chicago, and I was grateful since he had no air conditioning in his car. As we headed down Belmont Avenue, the changes of space seemed to happen block by block. With each block heading west, the space became more open, factories stood vacant, the hipness and youthful vitality was removed, and apartment buildings showed erosion and age. After about four miles, though, a transformation appeared. Brick houses with well-manicured lawns lined the blocks. Small businesses dotted the street with signs in Polish and Spanish. We turned off Belmont and
maneuvered our way to the club. Street parking was ample in the neighborhood and we quickly found a spot in front of the club across from a realty store. Looking around, there was a bakery, pizzeria, jewelry store specializing in Italian imports, bridal store, hair salon, tile store, and Italian restaurant, all within eyesight.

The social club, the Blue Horn, was a storefront, locked in on each side by similar style construction. There were no signs on the façade and the shades were drawn on the large windows. When I walked in, the club looked like every other social club I had been in throughout my life: mismatched tables, folding chairs, tile floor decades old, and a few posters of Italy, soccer, and Frank Sinatra randomly placed on the walls. The counter displayed a jar of individually wrapped biscotti while a gold espresso machine peeked out from behind the counter. A 40-inch plasma television sat in the corner but could easily be viewed by anyone sitting at the tables. The front of the store had enough room for five tables crowded together with three to four seats at each. There was a full cooler that offered San Pellegrino, Aranciata, Moka Espresso, Limonata, and Yoga peach drinks.

Although it was 2pm on a Saturday, there were eight men watching football\textsuperscript{32} on the TV. An overstuffed ashtray and espresso cups covered the table. My friend walked over to one of the tables, greeted an older gentleman, and began talking for a few minutes. The man turned around to look at me, then back to my friend and continued talking. After a couple of minutes, my friend came back and ushered me through an open doorway to the back of the store. We passed through a hallway that had empty crates and cleaning supplies stacked against the wall. Joe opened the swinging door to a back room where a man was sitting reading the paper.

‘Oh, Johnny, what do you say?’

\textsuperscript{32} Soccer in America.
Johnny looked up and smiled. ‘Joe, how long has it been? What are you doing around here? You looking to place some action?’

‘No, I brought a friend of mine over here. She’s looking to talk for a bit. You got a minute?’

Johnny looked over at me and said, ‘You Joe’s friend? What do you want?’

I felt immediately queasy. It was not the most welcoming hello and despite his small stature, he was an imposing figure. I walked over to his table and sat down. Johnny was no more than 5 foot, 5 inches, but his face expressed the emotion of “don’t mess with me.” His eyebrows had turned grey, but the hair on his head was a rich black color, parted to the side and gelled carefully. He wore a thin-stripped gold and black sweater with black dress pants, black loafers, and 2 gold necklaces. One necklace was a small cross, the other a medallion I couldn’t make out. I would later come to find out the medallion was of St. Joseph, common among Italians. He made me nervous as he stared at me, and that feeling never went away even after months of knowing him.

I explained to him that I was doing a research on bookies in Chicago and New York and was hoping to spend some time with him.

‘What are you going to do? Follow me around? What are you looking to know?’

I laughed. ‘No, not follow you. Just hang out around here. See how you operate, get to know your players, you know. But really it depends on what you’ll let me do.’

‘What are you?’ he asked.

‘I’m sorry?’ I asked.

‘You know, what are you? Your background.’

‘Ahh. Well, I’m a Chicago girl first and a guinea second,’ I said.
He chuckled. ‘A guinea? You bad mouthing your own people?’

‘Nah, it’s a term of affection.’

‘I thought you looked it. You Southern right?’ Johnny asked.

‘My father was from San Fili. Came over when he was 10,’ I told him.

‘That’s good,’ Johnny said nodding. ‘You get an education. See, your pa knew that. That’s what’s important. I tell my kids that all the time. Do what you want but stay in school, do good in school. The rest will come.’

I nodded in agreement.

We talked for another forty minutes about my neighborhood, his, where to still get grocery items imported from Italy, and his kids. Johnny has two daughters, age 23 and 18, and one son, age 15. He and his wife have been divorced for 11 years, though he painted a picture of an amicable relationship. It was around 3:30pm when Johnny ended our conversation and said, ‘Why don’t you come by sometime during the week? I’ve got to drop something off in a few minutes but come by and we’ll see what we can do.’

‘Sure, sure. Any specific time?’ I asked.

‘I’m always here,’ Johnny said. ‘And if I’m not, one of the guys will take care of you ’til I get here. I don’t know why you want to waste your time with this. I don’t even know if I can help. And we’re going to have to talk about some things before you do anything.’ I thanked him and started walking toward the front room while Joe stayed behind to talk to Johnny for a few minutes.

The Montclare neighborhood, though demographically diverse, could easily be mistaken for a Little Italy enclave. Older residents who lived in the neighborhood were Italian, either first

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33 As my time with Sal progressed, I discovered this was not the case at all.
or second generation. The newer residents ranged in ancestry from Arab to Polish to Mexican. I spent approximately two years and five months working in Montclare.  

There were never more than eleven people in the Horn at a time, mainly due to the size of the place. Unlike some of the other gambling dens I frequented, it was not the primary setting for gamblers. Instead, the Blue Horn and a bar/cafe (called the Pinot) four doors down served as a dual setting for the men. Johnny could always be found in the club, and it was there bets were placed. However, many of the gamblers watched the games at the Pinot rather than at the club. The Pinot was more conducive to a social setting; it was larger, had multiple (three) televisions, the seating was more comfortable, and it was frequented by both men and women. I never saw a woman at the Blue Horn besides Johnny’s aunt. Maria only was there to collect her husband Marco or bring her grandchildren by to say hello. The division between young and old played out in solidarity through either ethnic (older generation) or class (younger generation) ties. Despite this, the thickness of the Blue Horn was deep, and Johnny’s long-term stability helped form a cohesive community around the den.

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34 There was an eight-month break I took for personal reasons, as a situation arose with a couple of the men that I found uncomfortable.
Part III
Identity in the Den
Chapter 5: Put Up, Man Up: The Masculine Den at Work

THE MASCULINE DEN

‘Who the fuck is this guy in his suit? Do you have a maître de now, Paul? Are we going to have to shine our shoes before we come in?’ —Bernie, Jefferson Park

‘They act like a bunch of pussies. They can’t take their gravy like men. It’s always, you pushed the line, you knew so and so was gonna skew the favorite. My mother could handle losing better.’ —Freddie, New City Bookie

Although this dissertation did not begin as an exploration of masculinity, it was clear after only two months of ethnographic work in New York that to examine bookmakers and gambling is to explore the male realm. Not only is a general study of masculinity in the United States undertaken, a focus on masculinity in the workplace and the reproduction of masculine identities are explored. As of late, there is a growing body of research on masculinity, gender, and identity (Kimmel 1996; Messner 1989; Messerschmidt 1993). This work hopes to add to the rich research conducted before me.

Gambling is not a gendered leisure activity; however, sports betting is quite gendered, with the vast majority of clients being men. If one visits a casino, there will likely be a fairly even distribution of both males and females. Women will be more prominent at the slot machines, while men will be huddled around table games such as blackjack, roulette, or poker. Still, both sexes will consume in a casino, and feel comfortable in the space. In fact, casinos in recent decades have targeted the female population (and their pocketbooks) by developing a feminized space in casinos. Slot machines are pretty, decorated with artwork and a themed style
often based on popular TV shows and films.\textsuperscript{35} All of this is done to draw the player in, to engage her emotionally in wanting to play \textit{that} particular slot. On a trip to Las Vegas in December 2010,\textsuperscript{36} I heard one young woman exclaim, “Oh my god, Sex and the City! We have to play that!” as she dragged her friend to the row of slots. Casinos have become cathedrals of consumption, as Ritzer (1998, 2005) so cleverly labeled it. These consumption zones are now friendly for both sexes. However, slot play is very much a feminized betting form. Men who engage in slot play are not taken seriously; they are seen as weak and impulsive. There is no strategy or skill to slot machines, thus males have designated it a female space in the casinos.\textsuperscript{37}

When we move away from casinos and towards sports betting, the gender dynamic slides to almost exclusively male. Not only do the vast majority of women choose not to bet on sports through a bookie, they are not welcome in this arena. While casinos are designed to accommodate and please both sexes, a place where sports betting occurs is not; in fact, it is clearly geared towards men. This does not mean that bars or union halls in general are male-only domains. Certainly, in the twenty first century, women feel comfortable entering most any bar. However, the symbolic space in said bars where dialogue and betting takes place is created for men. An attempt for a woman to engage in discussions about hockey or participate in laying down a bet is most often met with sneers and criticism.

\textbf{OUR SPACE FOR OUR STUFF}

\textquote{Why would they want to be here anyways? What do they get from it? What do they know about what we’re talking about?} \hfill —Thomas, Montclare

\textsuperscript{35} See Picture 1: \textit{I Dream of Jeannie} based on the popular TV show.
\textsuperscript{36} I took a total of four trips to Las Vegas, three to Atlantic City, and 6 to Chicagoland area casinos to explore demographic differences.
\textsuperscript{37} See Picture 2: \textit{Hexbreaker: Break Your Luck}. A popular slot machine in many Las Vegas casinos.
In each of the eleven dens I worked with, it was very clearly stated by both the bookies and most of the clients that this was not a place for women. Thomas’ sentiment rang through in each location, though for the most part there was nothing hateful about it. Instead, it was often based on confusion; the men couldn’t understand why a woman would want to be a part of this environment. They genuinely believed a woman could derive no pleasure from the gambling experience a bookie provided.

The important distinction here is the type of gaming that takes place. Casino gaming, and more specifically slot play, has a markedly different demographic than does sports gambling. As slot play is based on chance and involves no skill or knowledge, it is regulated to women’s play. To bet on sports, one must have a modicum of knowledge and skill; these are qualities associated with manhood and masculinity. Thus, sports betting is men’s play.

On a visit to the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas, I stood behind three men playing blackjack at a $20 minimum table. Known as a ‘table limit,’ it refers to the smallest amount you can put down for each hand; in this case, $20. Though that may not seem an exorbitant amount, it quickly adds up. The men were in their late 40s, and in good spirits despite two of them being down over $200. The cocktail waitress came up to take drink requests. She was dressed in the standard outfit: black stockings, high heels, and a blue velvet unitard corset with a heart shaped neckline and a barely-there covering for her behind. As she walked away, one of the men turned his head to look back at her and noted, “I’m glad my wife stayed with the girls.” The others laughed and the next minute and a half was spent discussing the cocktail waitress’s legs.

38 Date: 12/23/10
I stayed at the table behind them for another 55 minutes. These were family men who looked down to earth and fairly respectable. In the space of a blackjack table, they were able to have an overtly sexual conversation about a woman. There were no whispers or coded language; it was perfectly appropriate for them to carry on the way they would about a lawn mower. The gaming space, even in casinos, is gendered. It’s not just that men dominate the table games; rather, it is the physical space the games are located in that men take on as theirs. They were allowed to reinforce their masculine selves through talk in ways they couldn’t do at the workplace, at a restaurant, or in their home. The social acceptability of heterosexual traditional masculinity is much higher where gendered gaming takes places. Even the layout of a casino is designed to frame the space for masculine norms to be reproduced. The table games are all located in one area, often the center of the casino, and the slots are separated by a wide pathway. The pathway is the physical manifestation of the gendered division of gambling.

Though a social activity, gambling is serious business—not just for the bookie, but for the bettors. It is a constant attempt to show the most masculine self, to downplay fear and insecurity, and show up other bettors through knowledge of sports. In sports betting, the stakes for performing masculinity are high. Indeed, as Dennis told me, ‘I don’t know. It’s a guy’s place. You gotta know things. It’s not a sissy way to spend your time.’ In the gambling den, a type of symbolic capital is gained or lost by being “real men.” It is no surprise sports betting is synonymous with masculinity, given that sports and masculinity are nearly one and the same (Schacht 1996). Qualities typically associated with sport, such as competitiveness, aggressiveness, and strength, are all qualities revered by the hegemonic masculine culture.

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39 Conversation moved to one feeling genuine distress about having to let go an employee, another about one who has a daughter graduating from 8th grade, and another about laying down sod in the backyard (and how expensive water is in Las Vegas).
40 Bettor in Koreatown, Los Angeles.
DOMINATION IN THE DENS

The concept of hegemonic masculinity, first articulated over a quarter century ago, has played an enormous role in how we understand male identity. As Connell (1995) and others have argued, there is not one type of masculinity, and traits deemed “masculine” cannot be solely attached to one bodily sex category. Thus, a focus in this research is on multiple masculine identities, both in terms of traits embodied and negotiations between the groupings. Rather than a singular form of masculinity, a proposal of multiple masculinities was put forth that allows for a broader understanding of gender (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985). In a numbers sense, hegemonic masculinity is not the norm; that is, only a small percentage of males may actually employ it. However, it is very much normative, and it is the most respected way of being a man (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005).

Hegemonic masculinity is “culturally honored, glorified and extolled at the symbolic level” (Messerschmidt 2004: 43). Traits such as “not backing down” and being able to “hold your own” are highly valued (see: Canaan 1996; Messerschmidt 2004). So too are these valued traits in the dens, which is perhaps why we see such a diverse grouping of masculine selves. As many studies have shown, no matter the type of masculinity you embody, you must relate to hegemonic masculinity, reinforcing the importance of being a real man.

While only a few of the clients actually embody hegemonic masculinity (white, upper/middle class, heterosexual), the majority of clients fall under a protest masculinity spectrum (Connell 1995). As a significant portion of men in the dens are working-class (in income and philosophy), their ability to gain hegemonic status is consistently negated. In larger society, their power is marginalized and their cultural status has weakened over the decades as their labor has become less valuable. However, they are not complicit; the men in the dens
actively embrace their marginality of class and create solidarity from this. It is an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ grouping which emerges. The men resist and generate a performance in celebration of their masculine selves. It is this very marginalization in larger society that is turned upside its head in the dens; credibility is shown through traits and behaviors revered by this class group, which may be (and often are) inconsistent with the dominant masculinity in larger society. Thus, the men who do have power, wealth, and status in society must accept their subordinate status in the den and comply with the protest group’s demands. For the marginalized group, this is a way to resist, to take back a morsel of authority. To a lesser extent, this is true of ethnic and racial group status, whereby White ethnics and men of color in the dens, possessing a marginalized status in society, form cohesion in an attempt to resist and rework dominant masculine identity. And, while it may have little effect or importance in terms of a broader political response, it is significant in the social space of the gambling dens.

As the gambling dens are sex exclusive, the concept of homosociality must be examined. In each of the eleven dens, the production of homosociality was present; that is, nonsexual attractions men hold for other men (Bird 1996). The presence of homosociality in turn maintains heteronormative standards of masculinity as identities that are not in line with the dominant social group are oppressed. Bird (1996) outlines three meanings as to how hegemonic masculinity is perpetuated through homosociality: emotional detachment, competitiveness, and the sexual objectification of women. Just as gender identities are socially constructed and not static, so too are there various levels of the three aforementioned shared meanings. While emotional detachment in some form is present in the majority of the bettors, it is not uniform. Withholding expressions of intimacy maintains both the norms of hegemonic masculinity and individual identity boundaries (Chodorow 1978). Yet, to express feelings is not always a
weakness. Bettors are permitted by the social group to be emotional when they discuss teams, sports players, or certain games. While detachment enforces identity boundaries, this allows a group identity to form, and bettors to be a part of the fold.

The gambling den is, for all intents and purposes, the masculine den. It remains one of the few sex-segregated and gender-segregated social spaces. To engage and be a part of the scene you must not just be male; you must also be masculine. The regulars were sharp—they could spot a fake a mile away and, once found, did and said everything to emasculate the man further. The physical representation of a male is not what solidifies your place in the betting den. In the den, there is a clear checklist of what comprises a ‘man.’

**HOW YOU MAKE IT**

Paramount to the group making a decision about a bettor is his knowledge of sports-players, statistics, how the game has evolved, and history of the teams. Chart 4 displays, in order of importance, the traits for the social group (bettors) to determine an individual’s (another bettor) manhood. These ten traits were compiled based on interactions among the bettors in the eleven dens. Each time the social group sussed a bettor’s masculinity, an annotation of that conversation’s trait was written down. The list shows the ten most frequently used factors in the decision-making process. Below is the top five in more detail.

1. Without question, he must be able to carry his own in the topic of sports. This includes not just sports one bets on, but all major events. The bettor is expected to converse about numerous teams, not just the ones he follows, and know of past and present games that are significant.

2. Heterosexuality is central. It is not only sexuality that is important, but also sexual prowess and discussion of sex (both real and fantasy).
3. If a loss takes place from a bet, he must shrug it off. The deeper the loss, the more casual he must be. Complaints cannot occur, aside from cursing directly after the event. He can be pissed at the amount of money lost, but there can be no whining or claims of unfair over/under lines, money lines, etc.

4. Occupation is a key criterion. Those in corporeal, manual, or traditionally blue-collar work are held in higher esteem. Those whose bodies are used to perform labor are seen as masculine. Work performed in office settings or equally comfortable surroundings are not as valued. Occupations that demand a dress code or positions that require dressy attire are looked down upon.

5. The bettor’s language, posture, and dress must align with the others’ notions of masculinity. Men who look too well groomed, seem too fastidious in dress, or who are grammatically exact are dismissed. Facing equal criticism are food and beverage choices. Food options considered “health conscious” lower the opinion of someone, as do mixed drinks.

Interestingly, income and personal wealth was further down on the list than I initially suspected. This is due to the notion of a very engrained working-class ethos that exists in the gambling den. Masculinity is not measured in terms of income as much as other traits. A bettor’s income, in fact, can work against him. There are, without doubt, exceptions to the above rules. In Chinatown, Pete approves his bettors with one question in mind: are you Chinese? If the answer is yes, you are welcomed into the fold. Ethnic ties are, for Pete, the only measuring tool he needs to decide who belongs. Similarly, Oscar and the men in the den in no way aligned with the criteria listed in number 4.

Although masculinity has shifted from strength of the corporeal to strength of the mind over the past century in the United States, the gambling den promotes and values a traditional
ideal type of masculinity. Bettors with prestigious, white-collar, or lofty occupational positions had to work harder to prove themselves to the social group. Of the 39 bettors who are in white-collar professions, 22 (56%) were the butt of gay or effeminate jokes, general ribbing about being ‘soft,’ or held in lower esteem because of their work positions. They were met with a cautious gaze from the social group in each gambling den, and there was a level of reverse-snobbery that was typical on any given day. This is the backlash of the cultural marginalization felt by the working-class male.

One Saturday morning during March Madness, Saul and I walked down 3rd Ave to buy a bagel before the West Regional Finals game took place. The night before at the bar, John had called Saul a pussy during a conversation about vacation days. Saul had mentioned to the group he was leaving for St. Kitt’s after March Madness to blow some of his winnings and unwind on the beach. John sneered and interrupted the conversation by saying ‘Oh did your travel agent put together a little package for you?’ He went on to call him a pussy and stepped out of the bar to have a smoke. After a brief pause, the conversation continued among the other men as if nothing had happened.

I asked Saul if it bothered him when John said things like that (it wasn’t the first time an interaction like this had occurred).

‘It’s bullshit. I grew up here. I went to Hamilton; my dad was a mid-level manager. He acts like I’ve had a silver spoon shoved up my ass my whole life.’

John’s ribbing genuinely frustrated Saul, but the more it bothered Saul, the more John persisted. In Saul’s mind, he was a working-class kid who had an aptitude for numbers and happened to make good on his skills. To John, Saul was delicate, a well-dressed prima donna

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41 March 24, 2007
42 Fort Hamilton High School
who knew about African art.\footnote{Saul did not in fact know about African art, but John associated Saul’s general knowledge of art with this, in large part because he saw it as effeminate.} That Saul remained in Bay Ridge rather than ‘upgrade’ to Manhattan was of no consequence; he lived on Shore Road, which was further evidence to John he wasn’t one of them.

Queering is one of the most common ways to de-masculinize another bettor. Language used in the dens is overtly homophobic, and slurs such as faggot, homo, and cocksucker peppered conversations. However, the majority of men in the den did not have an issue with homosexuality per se. Many were uncomfortable or squeamish at the thought of it, but were more apathetic than hateful. Instead, the homophobic slurs had little to do with sexuality but more to do with gender and, more specifically, gender nonconformity with homosexuality (Kimmel & Mahler 2003). As other research has indicated, one of the organizing principles of heterosexual masculinity is homophobia (Epstein 1998; Herek 2000). The men’s language and behavior has little to do with an actual fear of homosexuals, but rather a fear that they will be perceived by the social group as gay, and thus less than a man. This ideology in the gambling den is then performed as a way to show one’s strength of gender.

**A PUSSY PERFORMANCE**

This performance of gender must be understood within the local culture of a masculine space such as a gambling den. The den provides for a reinforcement of normative assumptions of masculinity, which in turn creates strong ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups among the bettors. As masculinity becomes a performance in the den, it means then the performance must be met with approval by at least one other bettor (Kimmel & Mahler 2005). The bettor who approves, of course, must himself be successful for the homosocial performance to gain legitimacy. In the dens, the
bookmaker was the strongest decision maker of acceptable performance. If he was okay with a bettor, others tended to let him into the fold at least marginally.44

Amado runs a small bookie operation in Echo Park. When we met he had only six clients, but was satisfied with what he was earning from them. I asked if he wanted to expand and have more bettors, as he just found out his girlfriend/mistress was pregnant.

‘Yea, maybe. That would be good. But then I gotta deal with people. And I hafta hear them bitch and act like pussies when they don’t win. These guys, I know them. They know how to handle it. No one’s being a bitch-ass because they laid 5 on the Lakers and they choked.’

Amado’s decision to not take on more clients and build a larger economic base was due to his resistance of having to deal with ‘pussies.’ He was around men, or males he considered to be men, because they took their losses like a man and didn’t complain. How loss is handled ranked in 3rd place across all dens in level of importance for determining manhood. Not being able to control your emotions, complaining about a loss, or sulking about a loss, are all attributes the bettors associated with women and non-masculine behavior. A bettor was a ‘bitch,’ ‘punk,’ or ‘pussy’ if he couldn’t accept his loss.

While there are multiple masculinities and multiple acceptable masculine identities, Goffman (1963) reminds us there is really only one masculinity, and when a man fails to achieve it, he views himself “as unworthy, incomplete, and inferior” (p. 128). In the gambling dens, if a bettor fell short either by a loss or not knowing something about a fight, he had a heightened sense of awareness that he was inferior, at least in the den. This second-class status would be handled most often by a departure from the den for at least three days. By not being present, the bettor would ‘save face,’ presuming that when he returned, all would be forgotten and his

44 This is not to say, of course, there weren’t disagreements among the bettors, but all were tolerated at the very least.
masculinity restored. During my ethnographic research, I counted 63 times where a bettor took a hiatus from the den based on these circumstances. Three days was short enough for him not to miss out on the action but long enough for things to have developed while he was away. Length of time away showed how inferior he felt.

**SECLUDED SPACE, SECURED MASCULINITY?**

As with Gregory’s (2006) dockhand workers, the absence of females allowed the men to be completely uninhibited in their displays of masculine behavior. The space of the place is of significant value to training, reinforcing, and performing gender. Each of the eleven gambling dens was exclusively male in the betting circle. However, Chinatown, Echo Park, Lincoln Square, and New City were gambling dens that were not in a bar. Thus, the other 7 were at times confronted with the female sex by force because it was a bar. Even in the bar, in the company of the other, spatial markers are placed as an effective measure to delay invasion (Shaffer & Sadowski 1975). Bettors will occupy the bar area, claiming bar stools and the TV viewing area. Tables, booths, and standing areas of the bar were left for women and non-bettors. Because of the layout of most bars, bettors literally have their backs to other patrons, creating a physical barrier to their space.

The four betting locations that were not in a bar allowed for total exclusivity of a single sex. This in turn provided heightened levels of the performance of manhood, as there was no fear of intrusion from the opposite sex. However, this hyper-masculinized group behavior at times was problematic; the consistent lack of females meant there was never a reason for the men to check themselves or their behaviors. The more time spent in isolation of other men, the harder it became for some to readjust when leaving the space and entering other domains.
Joe is a client of Freddie’s in New City. Visually, he embodies manhood: rough, calloused hands, grease under his fingernails, work boots covered in debris, and denim jeans that were not purchased because they look ‘flattering’ or ‘slimming.’ In personality, Joe was equally masculine: he spoke mostly of male subjects, he drank heavily but held composure, and he spoke crudely of women. That said, he was polite and respectful of boundaries, and well liked by most of the other bettors. During the 2009 NFL playoffs, Joe increased the amount of time spent at the garage significantly. He was betting heavily on each game and was on a winning streak. Rather than spend 2 or 3 evenings like normal, he was visiting Freddie five or six days a week because of his jovial mood. This was over a year into working at New City, and within three weeks, I noticed a remarkable shift in demeanor. He was more aggressive, short-tempered, and callous towards me. When his girlfriend called his cell phone (as she often did to see what time he would be by for dinner), his language bordered on abusive. By all accounts, he was in a good place, having successfully laid bets on 6 of his past 8 games. Work was steady, and his family was in good health. The only change that occurred was the amount of time spent at Freddie’s.

As his time spent around women decreased, certain masculine behavioral traits increased. He surrounded himself in a masculine space that approved and reinforced this rough culture and, like Pavlov’s dog, he was rewarded each time he performed.

For most of my time spent in The Cabin, I sat and listened to the players as they played tong-its or Texas Hold ‘Em. Players frequently talked about one another, which on the surface seemed like gossip. They were not shy about bad-mouthing other players, especially when the other was not present. However, the men made clear distinctions between what they did and what their wives did. As Will, one of the players, explained, ‘Gossip isn’t true and you don’t say it to someone’s face because you’re scared ... we'll say this shit to anyone's face because it is
true.’ This distinction, whether real or imagined, allowed the men to retain their sense of masculinity and not engage in a feminized activity such as gossiping.

The landscape of an exclusively male space has been well researched (Meyer 2002; Weibel-Orlando 2008; Fine & Kuriloff 2006). Social spaces, such as the gambling den, are where men construct their lives. Often, race and class intersect these spaces. What makes the gambling den unique is its transcendence of race and class. Most masculine space (whether workplace or social) is divided by race or class, or both (see Bengry-Howell & Griffin 2007; Iacuone 2005; Meyer 1999; Gregory 2006). The steady flow of immigration from the late 1800s to 1930s created ethnic enclaves across U.S. cities. In turn, these ethnic groups niched into workplace types (Italians in tiling, Irish in bricklaying, Slavs in abattoirs).

By default, then, their social space became fragmented by ethnic and racial lines. Those who worked and lived nearby populated the local pub. This created separate masculine spaces for each ethnic and racial group. The gambling dens, on the other hand, are inclusive racial and ethnic masculine spaces. While some bookie locations have a stronger ethnic base, they are not singular in composition. Further, the spaces that do have a dominant ethnic identity are so because there is still an ethnic enclave present in the neighborhood. New York and Chicago had more bookie locations with an ethnic dominant group than Los Angeles. This is not surprising given the transience of persons and lack of stable communities in Los Angeles. Even in New York and Chicago, the gambling dens located in communities that had or currently are undergoing gentrification had a more diverse populace.

As many argue, there is no notion of a ‘fixed’ masculine identity and such an assumption ignores the multiplicity and complexity of gender. While there is no clear definition of what is meant by ‘mixed’ masculinity, I provide an outline here for clarification. Western masculinity in
the past half century has undergone dramatic changes, all of which have not occurred in a bubble (Aboim 2009). Macro-level political, institutional, labor, and economic changes have shifted masculine identity to a multi-dimensional process that is constantly adapting.

In the world of the gambling den, multiple masculine identities are not at work. Rather, these are static notions of masculinity that are a throwback to historic masculine identities. It is in the analysis of spatial zones where masculinity becomes multi-dimensional. That is, many of the bettors take on a traditional masculine identity upon entering the gambling den; however, it is a situational performance. In other spaces of their lives, these same men have strikingly different masculine identities.

Simon, one of the Bay Ridge bettors, takes care of his mom who is suffering from dementia. He cleans the house, cooks all of the meals, and spends most of his free time with her. He invited me over for dinner one Sunday and I accepted. After a few minutes with the two of them, I was shocked by how different he was in his home space. Simon prepared mashed turnips, peas, roast potatoes with rosemary, and a roast chicken: a “semi-proper Sunday roast” as he called it. The three of us sat in a cramped dining room at a table too big for the space. The floor was carpeted, which I found confusing, and a sliding wood door separated the space from the tiny railroad kitchen. On the wall above Simon, I noticed a shadow box with a collection and asked about it.

‘Oh! That’s my thimble collection,’ his mom, Mary, said proudly. I have over a hundred, but this box only holds thirty or so. These are the nicest. Simon got it for me.’

‘They’re lovely,’ I said. I hadn’t known thimbles were something people collect, but as I looked at Mary’s face, she was beaming with pride.
For the next 18 minutes, Mary proceeded to tell me what each thimble was, where it was from, and when she acquired it. Most were given to her by Simon, and each time she said it, she would touch his arm and Simon would look down or away. Simon had started the collection, having brought one home as a kid. They didn’t have a lot of money and what they did have his dad drank away. Mary ‘never had nice things,’ as Simon put it, so he bought her a thimble with his paper delivery money. This first thimble, though drab and metallic, earned a coveted spot in the wall unit.

After dinner, we had tea and I said I had to get home. Simon walked me out and we stood on the stoop talking. I thanked him for dinner and told him his mom was really lovely, and I could tell how much she loved him.

Simon smiled. ‘Yea, she’s great. You know, I got that thimble for her after my dad came home in a drunk rage and fell on top of the glass coffee table. There was glass everywhere and she had to clean it up.’ He looked across the street as his neighbor came out of the house and waved. ‘Anyway. Get home safe.’

By all accounts, Simon was a man, and had to be one in the home far too early. The masculine traits he performed in his home space were markedly different than in the gambling space. He embodied a number of traditional female traits-sensitivity, nurturing, domestic duties-that were never present in the den. For Simon, spending time at the bar, gambling, and talking with other men allowed him to perform a masculine identity he wasn’t permitted to in his home space.

**WHO DECIDES: MASCULINE IDENTITY BY ETHNICITY & CLASS**

Notions of masculinity can vary by ethnic groups, and at times in the den, there is friction because of such distinctions. The prevalence of “rough manners” (crude behavior, overtly sexual,
rowdy) is common among Italian men (La Cecla 2000), though this is only acceptable among the old-timers. 2\textsuperscript{nd} and particularly 3\textsuperscript{rd} generation Italian-Americans in the gambling den have forged a more modern ideal of appropriate masculine behavior. This is not surprising, given the multi-generational assimilation process. However, because of this, Italian old-timers may see the younger generation as ‘soft.’

Nate lives and works in Dunning, and is a regular at The Blue Horn. His grandfather emigrated from Naples in 1908 as a young boy. Two generations later, Nate remains in the same business his grandfather was in: freight and shipping. He does not speak Italian (a source of ribbing from the older generation), but he has a strong sense of ethnic identity and pride. Although he does not protest or complain when the older group says distasteful or crude comments about women, he is visibly uncomfortable. This has led the men to refer to him as “ricchione,” a Napolese term which translates to homosexual. Ricchione is not used literally, but rather to attack a man’s masculine self. Nate accepts this devaluation noting, ‘It’s worse if I complain. It’s like when my uncles used to tease me as a kid—the more I cried, the more they did it.’ This inter-ethnic jousting is permissible because it is within-group. The old-timers do not rib out-group bettors to this extent, believing it is not their place. In a sense, this creates a special bond among the Italians as an ethnic grouping.

Class, too, is diverse in the gambling dens. The performance of masculinity is most clear by class distinctions. Those in white-collar occupations see their income and wealth as an indicator of successful manhood. This is incongruous with the dominant masculine ideology present in all of the dens. Bookmaking, whether real or imagined, is rooted in a working-class male identity. Despite the fact that men across all classes gamble with a bookie in a variety of spaces, there is something subversive, rough, and risky about the interaction. It is not for the faint
of heart, the light-footed, or the meek. The characteristics associated with sports betting are those that are celebrated in ‘rough’ working-class culture: dangerous, risky, aggressive (Freeman 1983). Therefore, a working-class masculinity becomes the ideal masculinity in gambling dens.

In North Hollywood, Vinny’s clients were predominately middle- to upper-middle class males whose occupations were primarily white collar. Yet, when the men were in the den, they collectively developed and took on a working-class culture. Their behavior, while not harmful in any real way, was specific to the social space. They behaved differently at work, such as possessing a more neutral and respectful tone towards women. In the den, however, they did not fear Human Resources or being called out for political-correctness. They had a space of their own, to be men, to perform their masculine identity without ridicule or judgment. One may argue they needed the space more than anyone, as it was the only space left they were allowed to perform. At least the men in blue-collar occupations had a marginal division of labor whereby they could enjoy a semi-private space.

LEFT BEHIND: RECLAIMING SPACE AND MASCULINE IDENTITY

The workplace provides an important site for the production of gender identities. A body of research has shown how masculinity is reproduced in a work site (Collinson and Hearn 1996; Guerrier and Adib 2004; Kerfoot and Korczynski 2005). Less understood is how this construction of identity might operate in the context of immigrant groups who bring with them particular notions of gender from their countries of origin. These notions of gender then interact with “local” gender practices, often creating a discord between the two groups. In my research, I found a strong correlation between elevated levels of masculinity from out-group males and acceptance from in-group males.
Undoubtedly, there are conventional attributes of heteronormative gender identity and a dominant version of male heterosexuality in the United States. These identities are performed, reproduced, and affirmed in institutions on a daily basis (Halford 2003). One of the most important institutions where this takes place is the workplace. Like most identities, what is considered conventional has changed over time as versions of masculinity have fallen in and out of favor. Certain bodies have become favorable, as types of labor have become standardized. One cultural explanation has been that jobs themselves are the embodiment of idealized masculinity and femininity. How one manages his gender identity is an important facet of organizational life.

In October of 2008, Ronan, a bettor at the Blue Horn, slipped on a job and broke his leg. He was out of work for months. Financially, he took a major hit, but emotionally he was wrecked. I saw him more and more at the Pinot during the day, a crutch propped against the bar.

I caught him one Saturday at the bar during the NFL Playoff game between the Arizona Cardinals and the Atlanta Falcons. It was halftime and he stared at the screen bored. I asked him who he thought was going to take it in the 3rd quarter.

‘I don’t know. What does it matter?’ he asked. I questioned what was going on. All he said was ‘I’m useless,’ got up, and went to the bathroom.

I couldn’t understand what had changed or why he suddenly had become depressed. I asked Adam if something had happened to Ronan. He looked at me and shook his head.

‘You don’t fucking get it, do you? What the fuck is he gonna do? He’s barely pushing forty and he’s lost his leg.’

I rolled my eyes and said he broke his leg-nothing was lost.
‘That’s the beginning of the end. How much tiling you think he’s gonna be able to do? You don’t think it’s gonna hurt like a bitch when he’s on his knees for more than an hour? He’s got nothing else to do.’

Ronan’s body was his labor; the deterioration of it meant an end to work, at least work that provided a good wage. His body as labor was also a symbol of his masculinity, and that too had deteriorated. In his eyes, he couldn’t provide for or show anything of value. I saw variations of this repeated with some of the other men, particularly during 2008-2009 when the job market, especially blue-collar occupations, seemed to buckle overnight.

Labor was a focal point of conversation for many of the men; not being a participant in the labor force meant you couldn’t join in on the conversations. One couldn’t be a part of the dialogue, and it pushed him further down and away from the rest of the men. It was isolating, and it was obvious to see.

In traditionally male-dominated occupations, men map out conventional characteristics of masculinity, whereas in traditionally female-dominated occupations, men have difficulty identifying their masculine selves (McDowell 2003). I argue what is considered masculine work has not only changed over time, but there is a dissonance of what ‘masculine work’ is, based on ethnicity and race.

At the turn of the twentieth century, American cities underwent enormous technological changes. The advent of the assembly line, coupled with mass immigration from Europe, created an unprecedented growth in urban areas. Approximately 80-90% of immigration at the beginning of the 1900s came from Europe, largely from Southern and Eastern Europe. As manufacturing zones developed, new forms of transportation such as railroads were built, and new places were

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45 Of course, the exception to this was in The Cabin where unemployment and taking one’s wife’s money was valued and a source of much conversation.
established for industrial workers to live. Ethnic enclaves thrived, and urban sociologists had a seemingly endless play area to perform research.

Recently, research has focused on how, when caught between traditional, male-dominated culture and Westernized values of equality and partnership, men attempt to reconstruct their identities. However, this is not uniform or across-the-board. In fact, from my research, how long one has been in the United States, how much they self-identify as their ethnicity (versus ‘American’ or ‘White’), and what occupation they have, all play into how much of a discord men feel with their identity. Chart 2 in Appendix B shows ethnic background of each client, their length of time in the United States, their occupation class, and their self-identification in terms of masculinity. Four categories were created for levels of masculinity: traditional, ethnic-traditional, ethnic-modern, and modern based on clients’ descriptions.

*Traditional* is defined as those men who have clear boundary lines of what is considered feminine and masculine behavior. They reaffirm a masculine patriarchal dominance over women, believing their role as a male is to provide financially for the family while females should nurture and rear the children. Traditional masculinity centers on defining acceptable and unacceptable masculine behavior. It is rooted in historic notions of what male roles are, both inside and outside of the home.

*Ethnic-traditional* is akin to *traditional*, except that masculinity is influenced by one’s ethnicity. For example, while a traditional male would see cooking as a feminine occupation, an Italian ethnic-traditional male would view it as an acceptable skill. Likewise, while affection between men would traditionally be seen as non-masculine, allowances are made for this based on cultural traditions. In Jefferson Park, I witnessed on more than one occasion two Greek men who were otherwise very traditional show physical affection toward one another. This display
would otherwise be seen as effeminate, gay, or non-masculine; however, when taken in a cultural-social context, it is perfectly acceptable masculine behavior. While one could argue these intimate displays show a level of security in the men’s masculinity, I argue when men are dominate in a particular social situation, they are allowed to flex the boundary lines of masculinity because there is group consensus that it is acceptable. When an ethnic male group feels safe and in control of the space, they are able to exert their sense of masculinity without fear of ridicule.

The *Modern* level of masculinity refers to those males who saw themselves as modernized, not a ‘Neanderthal’, and open to less strict notions of what defined a male. These men were more likely to see themselves as having a more equal partnership with their spouse, were more willing to discuss subjects beyond sports, and generally more open to being comfortable around those unlike themselves.

*Ethnic-modern* masculinity refers to those males who see themselves as progressive but are at times restricted by their cultural upbringing. For example, a few of the Filipino men I worked with were very modern in their political viewpoints, in their comfortability with more ‘feminized’ males, and in their willingness to discuss traditionally female topics. However, when it came to child-rearing responsibilities, these same men had very traditional beliefs on their role as a father.

Proving oneself (and thus one’s masculinity) is a repeated ritual in the dens. This entails not just winning a bet, but being able to discuss a game, a play, or a team in detail. Chart 1 in Appendix B shows conversations between clients in all three cities that challenge a bettor’s masculinity. Over 95% of these conversations involve sports or traditionally male domains (auto, home construction, manual labor). Less than 2% of the conversations challenge masculinity
based on family values or ideals. Moreover, masculinity is promoted through competition, which is primarily based around skill and knowledge. In this respect, the skill and knowledge most coveted is in the arena of sports. Meanwhile, economic success is undervalued or devalued among the working-class men, though there is an attempt to be valued by upper- and middle-class men in the gambling den (Chart 4).

Other institutions (work, family, third spaces) have transformed over time, making the traditional male archaic. Even just a quick glance through the current lexicon shows this, as words such as “metrosexual,” “manscape,” and “modern male” have become part of popular jargon. A Google search for the “modern male” has hundreds of hits ranging from articles on how to be a modern man who women will be attracted to, who employers will like, and who can accessorize properly. As anthropologist Peter McAllister has argued, the modern male is inferior to his ancient ancestor in almost every respect: physically, intellectually, and sexually (McAllister 2012). However, we do not have to return to the Ice Age to see how ideals of masculinity have changed. Less than a century ago, masculinity was defined by physical strength, largely brought on by necessity, as manual labor was a core component in the work force. Being bookish was feminine, as was being emotionally tuned in.

Today, masculinity is often displayed through economic success. Physical strength is less important, and the mark of a man lies in his financial prosperity. No longer is there a need to be handy with tools, lift a hundred pounds, or work on your car’s engine. A man who is successful can pay someone to do those jobs. The heteronormative standards of masculinity have evolved along with historical processes of production.

Those left behind in routinized, monotonous manual labor positions have, as Thompson (1988) argued, chosen one of three paths: avoidance, change, or acceptance. By acceptance,
Thompson maintained workers put ‘one’s heart elsewhere;’ mainly, transforming the workplace into a zone of both work and leisure. I contend the bettors who are still in occupational degradation do not attempt to transform the workplace, but rather find leisure and pleasure in the gambling dens. This allows them to resist the subjugation that is so palpable in their workplace.

‘I don’t know. It’s a job. It’s not like I’m excited about going to work or like I have some longing to do this. It’s not a career,’ Art said. Art’s nonchalance towards his plumbing job was typical of the men I spoke with. They did not loathe their work, but neither did they find fulfillment in it. Rather, most saw it as a means to an end that permitted them financially to engage in leisure activities (gambling, drinking, electronics, activities with the family). On the shopfloor, Leudtke observed men partake in horseplay during illegal breaks (Leudtke 1986). As well, they engaged in illicit activities such as drinking, gambling, and fighting, all oppositional gestures that have a foundation in ‘rough’ masculine culture. Today, gambling and drinking in the dens is a performance and reinforcement of rough masculine identity. Each den provides a physical space and authorizes this code of behavior.

SHOULDN’T LAY IF YOU CAN’T PLAY: TAKING LOSS LIKE A MAN

Masculinity is not something innate, nor is it something one has; rather one ‘does’ masculinity. Each performance either reinforces or negates one’s masculine self, and it is in the den, among the gaze of the betting group, where masculinity is measured. As masculinity is socially constructed, it is not only about what being a man is, but what being a man isn’t, thus reinforcing the ‘essentialness’ of gender (West & Zimmerman 1987).

In many sports, ‘taking it’ is an integral part of masculine performance. Being injured and continuing to play, being heckled or harassed and still showing up on the field, and being down with no chance of winning but still giving it your all are all examples of players ‘taking it.’ Fans
cheer on and admire this dedication as it reaffirms the player’s status as a man. A player’s status can quickly be in jeopardy if he is injured and refuses to play (Curry 1991). Certainly, the ability of a player to ‘take it’ is just as important as the player’s actual sport competence.

In the gambling den, there are no sport players, but there are the accompanying sport bettors. More than fans, less than athletes, they hang somewhere in the middle but are integral in the world of sports. Just as with players, how a bettor ‘takes’ a loss is a good indicator of his masculinity. Other bettors judge each other on this performance, and the least liked bettors are those who are chimps or sore losers.

‘It sucks to lose. It’s a hit on the wallet and it’s embarrassing if others played right and you didn’t,’ Lamar confided. ‘But you gotta take your lumps like a man.’

When a game ends or it becomes clear a bettor has lost, the social group observes how the bettor handles his loss. This is a key moment in the interaction ritual of the gambling den. How the bettor presents himself and what face he presents to the group will determine his level of masculinity. Presenting the ‘right face’ (Goffman 1967) means to respond with confidence and security, no matter how financially painful or embarrassing the loss.

After Dennis lost $1850 on the IDF Heavyweight Title of Klitschko vs. Brewster, he shrugged his shoulders and said, ‘It was a bad call but I like the underdog sometimes.’ I asked him how he could be so cool having lost so much money on a match that lasted only six rounds.

‘What am I going to do? Be a baby and cry? That’s part of the game. You play, you lose. You play, you win. Nothing worse than seeing a crybaby. Shouldn’t lay if you can’t play.’

‘Shouldn’t lay if you can’t play’ was a reference to laying down a bet. Dennis’ belief was if you’re not man enough to lose, you’re not man enough to bet. Losing was part of the betting process, and it was where stakes were the highest. It was during these times that one’s
masculinity was defined. Taking a loss was a way to show one’s ‘hardness,’ another key trait of masculinity. While Willis (1990) used ‘hardness’ to describe a boy’s willingness and ability to fight, ‘hardness’ here implied a bettor’s willingness and ability to hold composure after a loss. This ‘hardness’ confers status and it is a respectable trait among the bettors. The main reason Pete is so disliked among the Koreatown bettors is because of what a sore loser he is. Similarly, not bragging about winnings or prodding too much fun at any one individual player ensures group solidarity, cohesion and trust. Because any one person has the ability to call the authorities and hurt the establishment, a certain amount of cooperation and mutual respect is given.

When bettors do win, it is a time marked by celebration. However, all bettors know you are only as good as your last bet, so the celebration is always ephemeral. Topher is easily one of the most well liked bettors at Old-Timers, the West Town gambling den. At 25, he is young compared to most of the group, quiet, and keeps to himself. There is nothing noteworthy about him, except that after each win, he will buy a round of drinks for whoever is at the bar. Generosity with one’s earnings is highly valued in the dens. As Hughson noted in his fieldwork with soccer fans, the ‘generosity expressed by willingness to spend money on friends’ is a mark of one’s manhood (Hughson 2000, p.12).

Presenting masculinity is not only about manners and poses, but words and utterances as well (Akerstrom 2011). Performing masculinity correctly in the den means using the correct word choice and style of speech. Masculinity is socially constructed in the den to include everything from dress to acceptable conversation topics to drink choices to physical strength.

In my first night at the Jefferson Park den, three men, 2 White and 1 African American, in plainclothes came in and took seats at the bar comfortably. One of the men walked around behind the bar, bent down, and emerged with three beers, offering them to the other guys. As I
watched this interaction, I thought about saying something, but decided against it. The bartender appeared a few minutes later and began to talk with the customers. After listening to a ten-minute discussion of which sports car—the Shelby Cobra GT500, Ferrari 250 GTO, or the Chevy Corvette L88—was the best of all time, I walked up to the bar and ordered a drink and a bag of pretzels.

As I waited for the drink, one of the men sitting at the bar asked me what I thought was the best sports car ever made. I offered up the AC Cobra 427, suggesting that any car that causes the implementation of a speed limit is certainly worthy of the title. I knew naming the AC was a bit of a risk, since it was a British company, and these were men who were clearly American to the core. But, it was a car designed in cooperation with Detroit, so I figured I was okay. I was right and wrong: two of the men agreed on its beauty and speed, while the other said British car companies couldn’t wire electricity in his grandmother’s house without burning it down. We continued a discussion of classic cars for another hour, and I was happy (and relieved) I was able to keep up with the conversation, in large part due to years of listening to my car-nut friend. Conversations like this were common in the dens; hours were spent debating cars or other topics I considered frivolous. To the men, though, these conversations were meaningful displays of knowledge.

From my observations, there exists an internal authority in the dens whereby one form of masculinity takes dominance over other forms of masculinity (Connell 2005). This form of dominant masculinity is only dominant within the dens; in other social spaces, it is often the subordinated form. It is for this reason the gambling den is so coveted by the men; it is one of the only remaining spaces where their institutional marginalization can be ignored and their masculine identity celebrated.
Chapter 6: How We Get Down: Trust and the Deviant at Work

TRUSTING AUTHORITY

‘It’s pretty easy. When you’ve got cops as half your base, you’re not worried about getting hit. I’ve been doing this for 13 years, never any problems...well, not on my side. I live here, I work here, and people know where to find me and how to get me anytime they need me. And I know how to get them.’ --James, 35, Brooklyn

The importance of trust in an underground economic transaction cannot be underestimated. After four months of ethnographic research, coupled with my previous experiences, it was evident how many policemen gambled with bookies. The symbiotic relationship of trust that develops between the bookmaker and the police is of incredible significance. Out of eleven sites, there was not one location where a bookie did not have at least one policeman as a client. The reason for this is, I argue, is two-fold. Firstly, the occupation of policeman is still today considered a blue-collar job. Many of the men identify as union, working-class, rough males. Therefore, the gambling den is a safety space, a call to home, and a way to feel united among men similar to themselves. Secondly, the reason so many policemen bet with a bookie is because it is high-risk. These are men who already engage in risky behavior for a living. They enjoy the hunt, the thrill, the chase, and gambling fulfills their desire for excitement. Betting with a local bookie remains a place where men can find ‘action,’ as Goffman (1967) observed decades ago.

Bookies and sports betting are illegal in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Therefore, at its most simplistic, the work bookies do is against the law and certainly they can be labeled as ‘deviant’ for this. However, we must address the question of who is labeling an act as
deviant, why they are doing so, and what affect it has not only on the individual, but also on the community.

Taking and placing bets is labeled deviant by lawmakers. However, the community in Bay Ridge by and large accepts it. A legitimate establishment, the bar, condones (and in fact encourages) the bookie’s presence, knowing full well it is illegal. The bar is willing to take the risk because his gain (more patrons) outweighs this risk. Only the people who choose to place bets with the bookie have to interact with him. In Bay Ridge, for example, it is to James’s advantage to keep a low profile; that is, not seek out clientele.

As well, James’s work is within the confines of the community; he is not a big-time bookie that runs a ring across the borough. Thus, his work is only subject to approval or disapproval by those in the neighborhood. Further, James’s entire client base can be found in Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, and Bensonhurst; his deviant work is not bringing ‘outsiders’ to the neighborhood. Therefore, it is much easier to understand why James has little fear of being caught or arrested. His relationship with many cops, both retired and active, also puts him at ease. Those in positions of power and authority insulate the informal economy James works through. The presence of the bookie in the neighborhood bar does not lead to observed disorder; thus Sampson’s and Roudenbush’s analysis of perceived disorder in a neighborhood does not exist here. Bay Ridge is not labeled a ‘bad’ neighborhood because it has a moral liability; in fact, the neighborhood avoids this stigma because its residents do not consider the bookie immoral.

While it is clear The Cabin is a masculine space, frequented by very few women and where spousal abuse is culturally accepted, the fear of an angry wife is a real one. If an angry wife calls the landline of The Cabin or calls a player's cell phone during the game, it is accepted by all players that the call may interrupt the game for an extended amount of time. This
acceptance is due to the fact that making an individual's family happy decreases the chance that a wife will call the authorities. This is also intrinsically linked to The Cabin's role in the larger community. Similar sentiments were held in West Town, Jefferson Park, Park Slope, and Chinatown. The fear of wives or girlfriends ‘ratting out’ was taken seriously in the dens, both by the bettors and the bookies themselves. Ten of the eleven bookies said they did not trust women when it came to letting women into the circle.

‘These guys run their mouths sometimes. It frustrates me. They think a woman opens her legs and she can be trusted. I think a woman opens her legs and you can fuck her. I don’t like that shit in my house.’ Sal told me. His ‘house’ was the gambling den, and he was leery anytime one of his clients had a new girlfriend or brought a woman around for the evening. Men could be trusted, but women were objects and not meant to be involved in the serious business of gambling.

**WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU**

Freddie and I drank coffee in the garage one Saturday morning. He had text me the night before to let me know a 1957 Chevy Bel-Air Sport Sedan had been brought into the shop. It was, and remains, my favorite car ever manufactured, and Freddie thought I might want to look at it. As I sat inside the car running my fingers over the original steering wheel, I thanked him for letting me know.

‘You’re welcome. I knew you’d like it. Don’t see these Hot Ones\(^{46}\) a lot, especially all original like this. Needs a lot of work but it’ll look sexy when I’m done.’

We talked for a bit longer about the Bel Air and I asked how the car was brought to him.

\(^{46}\) Hot One is how GM advertised the second generation Bel Air.
‘See, people here trust me. The guys know I pay, they know I pay out on time, so when they hear from someone about car repair or work, they send them to me. They know I’m reliable so they are okay giving me money.’

While Freddie’s garage work and bookie work are two separate occupations, he sees the one as influencing the other. For Freddie, his upstanding character as a bookie informs others that he is someone to be trusted in the garage. He is an essential figure in New City, providing stability and client services. This link between identity and image thus created a link between his image and performance. Through the construction of self-images, Freddie’s identity influences his role performance (Burke 1980). In front of bettors, his behavior was ethical and compassionate, letting certain people slide on payments for weeks on end. In private, however, he accepted stolen parts at the garage and often was ‘shading the line’\(^\text{47}\) for certain bettors he didn’t like. His self-image was an idealized picture of his role as bookmaker and business owner that guided his identity.

Sal, too, saw his role in the community as beneficial. Having spent his life around the same six city blocks, he saw Park Slope as his community. He protected it, helped residents, ensured clean streets, and maintained a careful watch. For Sal, he was the ultimate eye of the street. When Little Lisa was going to be evicted from her apartment because the owner wanted to convert the three-flat to luxury units, Sal spoke with him and the deal never went through. During the winter, when it was especially cold or icy, Sal would make Lenny bring food over to three of the elderly women who lived alone. While his job was bookmaker, his role was community caretaker. He identified as such, and took pride in maintaining stability in a neighborhood that was rapidly changing through gentrification.

\(^{47}\) Shading the line is when a local bookie will skew the money line or points to increase his advantage. This is done either on an individual basis (giving different odds to different bettors) or overall (when a home team is playing).
I asked Sylvia, one of the long-term residents, if she liked Sal. She nodded emphatically. ‘He is a good man. He always looks out for me. And not just me but all of us. Nobody cares about the garbage everywhere; these kids just throw their junk on the walk. But if I tell Sal, he gets someone to clean it right up. He’s a good man.’

I asked if she minded that he was a bookie. ‘Why would I? He can pay his bills, can’t he? What’s he bothering any? He’s here all the time which is good because I can find him if I need something. And that’s not my business anyway.’

‘You don’t think it’s wrong what he’s doing?’ I asked.

‘What’s he doing? He plays games with the other guys. It’s like when we play cards. They just spend money.’

Sylvia’s sentiment was like that of many residents in the communities. Most residents were of the opinion that the role of bookmaker was not deviant. Even more, most believed this to be a secondary role to the bookmaker’s larger role of community watchdog. The role Sal and other bookmakers adopted as ‘advocate’ created a specific position in the social network of the community (Collier 2001). These are not conflicting roles, but rather mutually beneficial. The purported support, both symbolic and financial, a bookie offers to the community becomes his dominant status to the residents; his deviance as bookmaker is merely a situational deviance (Falk 2001).

Those who have the most interaction with a bookie are other men. Even within the gambling dens that double as a bar, women have little knowledge of the bookie. While they may be aware of his presence and occupation, it is not part of their experience at the bar. As Jamie, a Friday night regular in West Town, explained to me, ‘Oh these boys thinking they’re something

48 There was also limited understanding of what sports betting actually entailed.
big. I don’t care what they do…I just hate when a game’s on cause then you can’t pull the guys away for anything.’

Jamie was in her late 50s and considered a fixture in West Town. She would often put a song on the jukebox and start grabbing men to dance on any available floor space.\(^49\) A lifetime resident of West Town, she could tell fantastic tales of Joey the Clown and other Mafioso’s. Any time she was in a good mood, you could count on her to run outside at 1:00am, track down the hot dog vendor, and drag him in to offer up a late night snack. Her lack of interest in Frank and the bettors was similar to other women who frequented the bars; it didn’t affect their time spent so there was no concern.

Those who do engage with the bookie are males, and voluntarily choose to spend time in his company; this is a source of pride, not shame. For the bettors, the bookie is not viewed as deviant, but a service provider. As the men who interact with the bookie do not see him as a deviant, his identity does not become ascribed with said status. Moreover, as they do not see themselves as deviant by betting with a bookie, it reaffirms non-deviant status. Over 97% (160 of 164) of the bettors believed they were not doing anything wrong by betting with a bookie, yet all knew it was illegal. Even more, only two actually feared legal repercussions.

**DEVIANT OR DO-GOODER?**

Crime is virtually a male phenomenon, and the gambling den is no exception. The dens can be seen as part of the underworld, as described by Cressey (1972), in that they are social settings where criminal activities take place. Within the underworld of gambling dens, there is a reproduction of homosociality, whereby the exclusivity of males leads to their control of the space. While most of the bookies do not explicitly ban women, there is little reason to include

\(^49\) The bar was so narrow there generally was no floor space, so she would just sway and bump into people. Newcomers were confused and thought she was a drunk, but regulars just took her for her.
women because there is not a financial gain. Excluding outsiders is commonplace in the
gambling dens, more so than in the legitimate economy, because extra caution must be taken.

There are two threats bookies face: the threat of arrest and the threat from other criminals. A successful bookie negotiates each of these threats through practices and performances. The first threat is curtailed by welcoming police officers into the den. Each of the eleven bookies had at least one officer on the line; some, like Jefferson Park, had policemen as nearly 40% of their client base. Engaging authority reduces the possibility of arrest and virtually extinguishes this threat. Nine of the eleven bookies said they felt more confident in conducting business because they had policemen as clients. Of course, this level of trust was reciprocal, as policemen had a level of assurance that they would not be ratted out by the bookies. The positive relationship between criminals and local authority has been well researched (see Blum 1972; King 1972).

The second threat bookies face, threat from other criminals, is minimized through performative actions and talk. Conveying a warning of violence, using harsh or threatening language, and acting like a ‘tough guy’ helps to reinforce spatial ownership of the gambling den. While I witnessed only one violent act by a bookie (in Park Slope), the forms of talk were consistent. As well, bookies today are not affiliated with larger organizations; all of the bookies I worked with were their own boss running a community-level operation. Turf disputes were nonexistent, and therefore the threat of other criminals was not a priority.

To be a successful criminal, one must have healthy relationships with working partners (Shover 1972), such as bar owners, bartenders, and landlords. To be successful in bookmaking requires the establishment and maintenance of these relationships. It is what distinguishes a professional bookmaker from others. Sutherland’s (1937) criteria of professional thieves nearly a century ago can be applied to the criteria for bookmakers. To be a good bookie, one must: be
technically competent; have a reputation of personal integrity; specialize in bookmaking; and to some extent be successful in this criminal occupation. The first two criteria are especially significant for the bookmaker. To be technically competent requires not just a wide breadth of up-to-date knowledge of sporting events, but a strong mathematical comprehension. If lines are not set properly for a game, bettors will complain and not take any action.

THE SEDUCTION OF THE DEN

The normalization of sports betting in U.S. society has helped to eradicate the status of bookmaker as deviant. Newspapers print the betting lines for most major sports, fantasy basketball leagues are common among friends, churches advertise bingo nights, while football squares pools\(^{50}\) abound in offices and other legitimate spaces. The ubiquity of sports betting among not just avid bettors but reverends, grandmothers, and neighbors has helped to legitimize and decriminalize the bookmaker. While most who play in office or church betting pools would not bet with a bookie, they engage in the same leisured consumption as those who do. Thus, it makes it harder to identify and demonize a bookie or his bettors.

During March Madness, Micah brought in four of his colleagues to the Koreatown gambling den. K-Town Tap, though located in Koreatown, had a ethnically diverse and younger (late 20s to late 30s) mix of clientele. Micah and his friends had just finished the workday and were dressed in suits. All were lawyers; they were men sworn to uphold the law. As they sat down, Micah asked if Paul was around. I said he ran home to change but should be back in the next half hour. He turned back to his friends and they began to talk about Paul. It was clear after a few minutes of conversation that Micah had brought them in to ‘show off’ Paul. The fact that Micah held a prestigious job and was considered a valued member of society was mundane; the

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\(^{50}\) Generally, a football squares has 100 squares and a person will buy a square. The numbers inside the square are random, and everyone has the same chance of winning, as there is no skill involved.
idea that he bet with a bookie was exciting. His colleagues were impressed as Micah discussed Syracuse as the number one seed versus Vermont (who they were playing in the first round). His middle-class, vanilla life as lawyer suddenly disappeared and Micah had something to offer the men. He acted nonchalant as he spoke of losing $5,000 during the 2009 Sweet Sixteen round. Micah gained status from his colleagues through this performance and invitation to the den. This was not specific to Micah; many of the men felt a source of pride and bolstered sense of manhood because they used a bookie. The interactions, then, are not deviant or criminal but a festival of honor. Gambling with a bookie is seductive, and the thrill of participating in an illegal activity creates a psychological boost for the bettors (Katz 1988).

Historically, there has been a link between Italians and bookmaking due to the Mafia’s involvement and control in cities such as Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. Media depictions of Italians have and remain salacious (Casino, The Godfather, Force of Evil). The stereotypical concept of Italian manhood is reinforced through film and television programs. More so than any other den, The Blue Horn’s older generation reinforced the notion of Mafia ties. Everyone claimed to “know” or had “done a little work” for a high-level Mafia member. When I probed for details, however, I was given vague answers that never quite matched up. The men loved to impress me with this information: Adam told me a story one evening at the Blue Horn while we sipped Limoncello.

‘One Saturday morning I was opening the shop,’ 51 just got in and turned on the lights. There was this knock at the back door. So I grab my bat-I always kept a bat because there were these sick junkies who’d soon as rip you. I grab my bat and open the door and there’s Sam the

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51 Adam owned a bakery in Montclare.
Cigar. Just standing there. So I don’t say anything and he says ‘Hey I been craving some cannoli.’ So he comes back from Mexico and that’s what he wants. He wants my food.’

Adam’s story sounded incredible. While Sam the Cigar did return to Chicago in 1974, the likelihood of him knowing Adam or coming by the bakery is slim. This story, and the many like them, boosted the men’s confidence and self-worth. Outside of the den, stories such as Adam’s would not be well received yet here, they are seductive. The gambling den honors such stories, especially in Chicago where their histories are so intertwined.

After almost two weeks spent at the Blue Horn, I watched $18,000 get laid down in a matter of four and a half hours among 12 clients. Johnny didn’t write anything down. Italy was playing France in a soccer-qualifying tournament in Milan. This was the first day I saw money exchange hands, even though I had been at the club for two weeks. It was the first time Johnny didn’t kick me out or tell me to run down the street to the bakery to pick up some sfogliatelle for him. Of the twelve men I saw place bets, only 3 of them carried on a conversation longer than two minutes with Johnny. Eight of the conversations were under 50 seconds, and one lasted 79 seconds. This scenario would be repeated throughout the next two and a half years.

Johnny wasn’t a talker; he wasn’t interested in hearing about your job or your wife or your hammertoe. For 80% of his clients, he was strictly their bookie. He offered nothing more of himself and he asked nothing more of them. Although he knew all of their names and basic descriptive information, it was really more for his protection in case they didn’t pay. The first client on Friday came in around 12:30pm.

‘$2500 for The Blues,’ Ronan said, putting a stack of bills down. ‘And this is for last week.’

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52 Sam the Cigar was at one time the head of the Chicago Outfit. He fled to Mexico and lived for 7 years before being deported back to the U.S.
‘That’s a stupid fucking move,’ Johnny quipped without looking up from his paper.

Ronan shrugged and walked out.

I couldn’t believe how limited the conversation (if you could call it that) was between them. I asked Johnny why he didn’t count the money before Ronan left. He put his paper down, looked me straight in the eye, and said, “Would you short me?”

I saw Johnny’s point. If someone was stupid enough to run up a debt he couldn’t pay or short change his bet, he risked Johnny’s wrath. Though I never was witness to it, a few people at The Pinot told me Johnny was a very violent man when necessary. He had come up in the second wave of the Mafia presence in Chicago, and wasn’t averse to, as one put it, burying a body. When I asked Pete, Johnny’s best friend, about it, he shrugged it off. ‘Who’s to say what happened when? It ain’t hurting Johnny with people thinking that, so let them,’ Pete said.

It wasn’t the answer I was looking for, or an answer at all. However, it was vague enough to solidify the image of a Mafioso type. There was a mythology surrounding Johnny, and everyone believed his tough guy persona, even those close to him. I saw an accountant: an elderly man who was good at math, who was set in his ways, who liked rituals, and whose bark was bigger than his bite.

**YOUR REP ON THE LINE**

A reputation of personal integrity is also vital to a bookmaker’s success. There is no protection of the law in the underground economy; reciprocal levels of trust must be maintained in this economic exchange or the transaction crumbles. Eleven months into working with Freddie in New City, his sister passed away from complications related to diabetes. She died on a Tuesday, the viewing was on a Friday, and the burial on Sunday. Freddie showed up on Saturday to take bets for the Bears-Packers face-off that was taking place the next day. He was, in one of
the bettor’s words, a ‘stand-up guy.’ All of the bettors agreed it showed dedication to them, and this was a mark of integrity. Prioritizing the bettors’ needs, as well as consistently paying out in a timely manner, were ways the bookie maintained a successful business.

The deviant status held by bookies and bettors are socially constructed and must be understood as part of the ‘cultural map’ neighborhood residents create. Gieryn (1999) argues cultural maps are created by individuals to decide what is ‘science’ and what is ‘nonsense.’ In the same way credibility is flexible and can be reshaped, so too is deviancy and deviant status. There are no clear lines of demarcation separating who as a gambler is deviant. Rather, a cultural map is drawn in residents’ minds to frame the gambling den. Communities with strong social cohesion had low levels of belief that bookies were deviant compared to communities with weak social cohesion.

More than the bookies themselves, bettors frequently claimed non-deviance status. This choice to reassign status is what Pfuhl & Henry (1993) refer to as ‘stigma transformation.’ Rooted in Goffman’s work on stigma (1963), they argue stigma transformation utilizes moral entrepreneurial strategies to change the label’s meaning. The bettors are not a deviant group; they are a minority group who has been marginalized. They transform the stigma from deviant to minority through class; for many bettors, their working-class status had left them on the outskirts of society, and so their geographic boundary of the den becomes not a deviant space, but a minority space.

Recently, work on identity has moved from individual to collective, with a focus on the legitimation of a ‘collective identity’ (Cerulo 1997). While there are multiple identities at play, and in competition, in the gambling dens, there is a unified identity all of the men possess. This collective identity of bettors allows for a legitimized positioning in the cultural system.
STIGMATIZING THE BOOKIE

Goffman influenced much of this ethnography; his work on identity, presentation of self, and stigma impacted my analyses of both bettors and bookies. While both are part of the gambling den, bookies and bettors have distinct roles, identities, and statuses. Below is an in-depth exploration of these individuals and their positions within the social group.

The role of the bookmaker has not changed over time; despite technological surges, restructuring of communities, and a departure from control from larger organizations, bookies continue to provide the same service of placing bets. The bookie can be found in virtually any community across the U.S.; although my ethnographic work involved only three cities, I received information of bookies in Philadelphia, San Francisco, San Jose, Atlanta, New Orleans, and Miami to name a few. With the exception of Nevada and Delaware, no other states permit sports betting. Thus, at the crux of it all, the bookie is part of the underground economy, his work illegal and his self criminal. Yet, the eleven bookmakers I worked with saw themselves as far more complex and far less deviant.

Chart 3 breaks down each bookie’s demographics, his location, stigma status, and role position. Age of bookies range from 22 to 67, though the majority are in their 40s or later. Years as a professional bookie also vary, with the least amount of time being four years to the longest time being 51 years. Of the eleven bookies, only four possessed what I would label as a ‘discreditable’ stigma; that is, one that is either unknown or not perceivable by the audience (Goffman 1963). Here, the audience is the community and its residents, not the bettors. The community as audience is important, as it is there the bookie lives, conducts illegal exchanges, and must navigate his daily life.

53 Though four states—Nevada, Delaware, Montana, and Oregon are permitted to conduct sports betting under PASPA, only Nevada actively does so. Delaware in 2009 launched sports wagering though it is limited to parlay betting on NFL games and horse wagering. New Jersey is currently seeking to expand gaming.
Those who possessed a discredited stigma often derived pleasure from their stigma; as well, they found their discredited stigma to be of benefit when navigating the larger community. The discredited stigma as I use it here is an obvious discrepancy because there is no attempt to conceal, and in fact a desire to express, one's identity as a bookie. Johnny in Montclare discovered early on that local businesses gave attention to him because of his bookmaker status; Pete in Chinatown found there were high levels of reciprocity he could take advantage of from working as a bookmaker, while Lucas in Jefferson Park felt well-protected because of his stigma. The audience’s awareness of the men’s role as bookie allowed these bookies not to concern themselves with residents’ discovery of their occupation. Seeing it as a source of pride, and in fact capitalizing on it, these bookies actually gained from the community knowing who they were. These gains ranged from being given resources or gifts, having others fear them, or having other look out for them. Indeed, Frank in West Town commented on the informal security his home received. Every winter, he would travel to Florida for two weeks to escape the city’s bitter cold. He never worried about break-ins or vandalism because he knew his neighbors would watch over his house; to have something happen on their watch would be an insult.

For the four bookies who held a discreditable stigma, it was imperative for the audience to be unaware of their role as bookmaker. Paul, Vinny, and Amado, all Los Angeles bookies, isolated themselves from the community; they made no attempt to reach out or provide neighborhood resources. They used the community as their workspace but gave nothing back in return. Thus, they had a heightened fear of arrest and being discovered. They did not forge ties between themselves and residents, business owners, or local authority in the neighborhood, and were therefore not protected the same way other bookies were. For Paul, keeping his identity concealed was further complicated by his parents’ strong ties in the community; he recognized a
sense of humiliation that would arise from their discovery. Paul’s parents owned a small grocery store in the neighborhood and were members of the local neighborhood business association.

Possessing a discreditable stigma in the underground economy not only becomes a problem of managing one’s identity so no one finds out (Goffman 1963), but it also is problematic because one is not insulated. There is no broader umbrella from which to shield yourself, no one to watch your back, and no reason for the audience not to throw you under the bus. Amado was the most fearful of this, as Echo Park’s gentrification meant police were taking notice of incivilities far more than they had when it was a lower-working class Hispanic community. Amado’s response was to keep his head down and his circle tight. This, of course, limited his financial gain, and made his daily life riddled with paranoia and fear of arrest.

Freddie in New City had a different outlook on keeping a low profile. A business owner, he did not want to appear ‘shady’ to potential customers. He worried members of the community would not take him, or his business, seriously if they discovered his identity. As an African American business owner in a diverse community of Hispanics, White ethnics, and other African Americans, Freddie had to appeal to a wide swath of people to ensure a steady income. He saw himself as a businessman, and took great pride in owning his own shop; that he was also a bookie was an identity he preferred to keep concealed. Only those in the den knew of his role as bookmaker, and he presented himself in such a way as to reinforce his honorable status. As Freddie noted, he was “already a Black man trying to get a White guy to trust me with his baby;” the racial inferiority he already felt would be more intense by revealing his stigma.

**THE (DISIDENTIFIED) STATUS**

Much of Goffman’s work on stigma explores the use of symbols, or signs that convey social information. While there are no outward, physical symbols either the bookie or the bettor
displays (such as a badge or membership card), there is social information they convey through bodily expression and talk. Despite diverse class positions of the bettors, there were strong attempts made by the middle and upper-class bettors to "speak the right way" in the den. These may include dropping letters (I'm havin' a bad beat); using improper grammar (I ain't seen Freddie have that much exposure ever); or devaluing one's intelligence (Shit, I need a calculator for this figure). The goal for these bettors is to blend in with the normative forms of talk; i.e. the working-class language. Donald and Ted were the biggest offenders of this social display. Both prestigious doctors, they practiced code-switching as a form of social negotiation while in the den (Scottson 1988). Already on a back foot because of their white-collar jobs and high levels of education, Donald and Ted sought to 'level the playing field' by changing their form of talk.

While status symbols (Goffman 1951) are generally perceived as expensive or high quality items (a Ferrari for example), the status symbols in the den exemplify the social group's working-class hegemony. The desirable class position here is that of the working-class; thus, symbols such as knowledge of skilled labor, hyper-heterosexuality, or competency in sports teams become badges of honor. The stigma symbols here, then, become what the status symbols are in larger society such as speaking well or wearing expensive clothing. These become stigma symbols because they draw attention to a debasing identity discrepancy (the attempt of middle and upper class bettors to be seen as 'average Joes'), which in turn reduces the individual's value.

Emphasis on idealized and normative identity in the den force some of the bookies to take on disidentifiers to establish themselves as 'normal.' Indeed, as Goffman said, "even the seediest vagrant can sit in Grand Central all night without being molested if he continues to read the paper" (1963: 44-45). For bookies such as Paul, this meant ensuring bar patrons and members of the community knew he volunteered at the local youth and community center. For others such
as Freddie, this meant offering services at discounted rates for 'those in need.' Both attempt to pass as normal and challenge their virtual identity as bookmaker.

**EMBRACING THE ROLE**

Seven of the eleven bookies had what I would label a ‘role embracing’ position. The other four were ‘role distancing;’ again, a Goffmanian concept to refer to individuals who express a separation between role and the self, allowing at times an opportunity to gain credibility (Goffman 1961). Here, role distance refers primarily to bookmaker as role, and secondarily to authoritarian as role. The bookies who distanced the role did so to create defensive functions. Three of these bookies were from Los Angeles, and role distanced because of dissatisfaction of the job, fear of repercussions, and as an opportunity to escape. For them, the role of bookie was not only one they wanted to conceal, but one which they wish to separate from. As Goffman points out, the idea of role distance provides a sociological means to deals with one type of ‘divergence between obligation and actual performance’ (p. 107). The men’s distancing from role of bookie, despite the responsibility to the role, altered their performance in the role; they are resistant to accept themselves in the role.

For Oscar, role distance was done for very different reasons. The role of bookie was in part embraced; yet, it was also a source of incredible shame. For each time The Cabin was raided by the police, Oscar fled to the Philippines. The role as bookie forced him into an unstable living situation whereby he left his family behind. His need to distance himself from the role was a necessity to provide a riposte to situations that arose which left him vulnerable. Oscar’s focus on his role as community advocate for immigrant Filipinos allowed him to create a level of credibility to work while claiming injury: ‘they are always after me’, ‘I’m just a poor Filipino
immigrant’, ‘they target me’. 'They', of course, is the authority, specifically the Chicago Police Department. He refused to judge himself through the role of bookmaker.

Those who I identify as 'role embracer's are so because they: have a demonstrated attachment to the role, clear qualifications in successful performance of the role, and a discernable investment of the role activity (p. 102). These bookies are enveloped in their virtual selves and make no attempt to hide their image. Of course, both the role embracing and role distancing bookies are not fixed identities; these can and do fluctuate depending on social situations and social groups, such as when Sal visits church on Saturday evening or James visits his grandmother.

Most of the bookies I worked with had a somewhat fictitious persona; the real was less violent than the imagined. However, it was the imagined that induced fear in bettors, and it was what kept most of them in line and on time with payments. Johnny carefully cultivated this presentation of self, and he knew exactly what this afforded him. He was gruff, spoke few words, encouraged the air of mystery around him by not being involved in his clients’ lives.

Johnny also knew what type of violent personality to create. Rumor had it one New Year’s Eve in Morton Grove he got mad at a relative who had hit his wife, grabbed him by the skull, smashed his face into a wall, and catapulted him down the basement stairs. While I never learned the validity of the story, Johnny repeatedly told me how a real man doesn’t hit a woman. It was his hard line, something he didn’t tolerate from anyone. He was wise enough to know that making this distinction between violent acts was a further reinforcement that some acts of violence are necessary, if not good. His ability to differentiate meant bettors (and others in the community) could see his violence (or potential violence) as legitimate. It wasn’t irrational or without cause; rather, it was deserved.
“I JUST WANT TO PUT SOME MONEY DOWN”: RITUALIZING THE DEN

Collective identities are created and preserved through rituals performed by a group. This is markedly apparent in the gambling dens where members of the betting circle engage in specific social practices. Rituals cannot only promote unity, but mark distinctions (Hermanowicz & Morgan 1999). The act of betting with a bookie is of course a ritual, but how one bets and watches an event is also part of the ritual. For a person to bet on a game, he must know what team he wants to bet on, and he must know the type of bet available—this can be a money line, over/under, point spread, to name a few. Bets are always offered up to the bookie in the same way, and this performance is part of the betting ritual: a dime on the Falcons, 5 on Klitschko to KO by the 5th, 50 on Georgia Tech. Asking the right questions, too, becomes part of the ritual: what’s the spread on Drexel and Iowa?; what’s the game line for the Bruins-Sabres game?; what’s the first half lines for Bulls-Knicks? It is clear to all in the group when an outsider invades their space: the performance of placing a bet is not correct. Newcomers are easy to spot, simply by listening to how they interact with the bookie. The rituals, though often mundane, are an integral part of the spectacular event of sports betting.

Freddie, Finn, and Artie sat in the garage watching the pre-game show of Bears v. Packers. It was Week 11 of the 2008 season, and tensions were high as they always are when Chicago is up against their nemesis. As it was a Sunday, the shop was closed and there was silence except for the TV commentators. In an hour, the garage would be filled with at least seven other men all looking to cheer the Bears to victory and make Freddie pay out. A young man in his thirties knocked on the side of the garage wall. Without taking his eyes off the TV, Freddie shouted that he was closed.

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54 The Bears did not win that game. It was an embarrassing slaughter ending in a 37-3 score.
‘Oh, I’m not here for the car. I’m uh, I’m a friend of Cole’s?’ He ended the sentence as though he were asking a question. Freddie asked what he wanted.

‘Oh, um, there’s a game. The Bears. They’re playing.’

Artie snickered but didn’t say anything. Freddie finally looked up from the TV and waited for the young man to continue.

‘Cole said if I wanted to, I could give you money—’

‘You sure can!’ Freddie said, cutting the young man off.

The man smiled and persisted. ‘Well he said I could give you money if I wanted to bet on the game. I want the Bears to win.’ Artie couldn’t resist any longer. ‘Don’t we all,’ he muttered.

‘Right, well, I was wondering if I could do that.’

At this point, Artie, Freddie, and Finn were in full form, unable to hold back. ‘If you can do that, I’ll give you money!’ Freddie shouted. ‘Don’t ask me, you should know if you can!’ Artie howled.

The man’s face was close to eggplant color at this point. ‘I just wanted to put some money down for the Bears,’ he said defeated. Finally, Freddie rose from the folding chair and walked over to the man to talk with him. Artie and Finn laughed and Finn commented, ‘These kids. These kids man, just go on your little computer and lay a dime.’

Later in the day, the story was repeated to each man who entered, with bettors chiming in with their own joke. By the end of the day, there had been 14 conversations about the man trying to place a bet. His inability to perform the ritual of betting appropriately served as unification for the other men. The man had ‘announced’ himself as an outsider, and the bettors validated their identity as part of the social group.
Betting with a bookie is a mode of performativity; at once it is something to consume and be consumed by. The men bet with a bookie not just to win, but also to see how others fare. Denis is a regular at Jefferson Park, though an infrequent bettor. He is disliked by many of the other bettors because he gloats when he wins, and is sour when he loses. When Denis takes action on a game, other bettors pay attention. The hope is he will lose, and they become consumed by his behavior during the event. Each dinger, whiff, or backdoor slider from the opposing team is met with smirks by the bettors, even if it hurts them financially.

The Chicago Cubs vs. White Sox rivalry is infamous in Chicago, so much so that there are at least half a dozen nicknames for it: The Crosstown Classic, The Windy City Showdown, and The Red Line Series, just to name a few. You are either a Cubs fan (North Sider) or a Sox fan (South Sider), and when the teams play the city (and the bettors in it) is enlivened. Most of the bettors in Jefferson Park are Cubs fans, and Lucas has to shift the money line; most of the lines were at +116 -123, but Lucas ran a +150 -110 line. Denis, like many of the others, got down with the Cubs. It was a tight game throughout; the Sox had started strong but in the 3rd inning, the Cubs caught up, and by the 8th inning, it was tied up. Each run made by the Sox garnered excitement for the bettors as they watched Denis grow agitated. His performance conferred his weak identity as not just a bettor, but as a man, and thus his outsider status.

In his undervalued essay “Where The Action Is,” Goffman (1967) pulled gambling out of mental health crevasse and into the sociological realm. For Goffman, action has two capacities: chancing something valuable and performing whatever activities are called for. Taking action is seen as an investment of ‘character.’ For the bettors in the dens, action is not just chancing a large monetary amount, but chancing one’s reputation each time he bets. What Goffman calls ‘maintenance properties’—courage, integrity, composure as part of an oriented performance—I
call reconstructive properties. Just because one bets with a bookie or takes action on a game does not automatically grant him status. How a bettor performs in the den has less to do with winning or losing and more to do with events leading up to and events after the outcome. Thus, the reconstructive properties are essential in determining a bettor’s character. Courage, integrity, and composure are not determined solely by the act of betting; rather, they are determined by how well a bettor handles a loss or win, how he presents himself in the den, and how he interacts with others. These are the fateful moments where character is tested.

The bookie first ascribes status to each bettor, and the other men follow suit. When a new bettor enters the den, others offer him a modicum level of respect because he has been granted access by the bookie. Once in, however, it is up to the bettor to negotiate his identity and achieve a status he desires. Therefore, there are fractions that develop separate from the bookie’s judgment. A better can remain a square for years if he never puts the effort in to learning the game and how to be a ‘good’ bettor (which includes learning how to handle losses and wins). While it may not seem important to elevate from a square label, these nicknames have status associated with them. Thus, to be a square in the den is to be low-status and therefore limited respect. Much of the bettor’s identity is decided by: how big a risk a bettor takes and how well a bettor handles a win or loss. Very little of a bettor’s identity and status comes from winning an event. The bettor’s character is decided by a public performance that takes place in front of otherbettors; thus, there is a strong attempt for bettors to carefully negotiate their identity while in the dens. While crafting identity can be done in the dens, loss of control often happens in high-risk moments, i.e.-when the bettor takes a significant loss from an event. This is where many bettors fumble and make gaffes that contradict the character they have been so careful to cultivate. One bettor in Jefferson Park often steps outside of the bar the last ten minutes of a basketball game.
‘I don’t want to lose control if I have a lot riding on it. I can look on my phone, see the score, and deal with it out there. When I come back, my anger’s gone and I can just be.’

When Theo won, it was equally important to step outside; he didn’t want to gloat or show too much pride. This attempt to maintain one’s character became a ritual in itself for the men. It was not just the bettors who cultivated a character; bookies, too, were constantly performing to maintain face.

Identities of any kind cannot be measured in isolation, though this is particularly salient for bettors and bookies. The bookie has multiple, at times conflicting, identities: he is king, benefactor, tyrant, deviant, unwholesome, or family man depending on who is asked. Yet, it is within his social space, the betting den, the bookmaker draws most of his self-image. In the den, the bookie is sharp, in control, fair, and an asset to those around him. He charts this social space appropriately, secure in his feedback identity (Mead 1934). The bookie’s performance, then, is influenced by this confidence. All but two of the bookies I worked with self-identified not just as non-deviants, but as legitimate businessmen. Moreover, they saw themselves as beneficial to the community.

**WHITES ARE STUPID GAMBLERS**

Despite being a gendered third space, the gambling dens are racially and ethnically diverse. Being and embracing masculinity is far more a test of character than one’s race or ethnicity. To say that race doesn’t matter in the dens would be incorrect and simplistic. In-group racial identity is prominent, though in some dens more than others. My research shows the more tightly knit and homogeneous a gambling den, the more likely racial stereotypes and levels of superiority emerge. The Cabin was the most exclusive by race (and ethnicity), and thus had the highest levels of racial hierarchy in play.
Of the twenty people I worked with at The Cabin, all were of Asian-Filipino ancestry. Fifteen were full Filipino, two were Chinese-Filipino, and three were Korean-Filipino. Six were under the age of 30, eight were under the age of 50, and six were over the age of 50. In addition to the players, I spoke with six people who were members of the church but did not frequent The Cabin. All of the women were over the age of 40.

Of those observed at The Cabin, 16 were considered regulars, with at least two visits per week. Two of the regulars were women, and they had a direct link to Oscar: they were his girlfriends. Another woman who came by infrequently was his girlfriend’s (Belinda) mother. Seventy percent of the regulars (all male) were unemployed and used their wives’ income as the primary source of their betting funds. This was one of the reasons Fridays, the beginning, and the middle, of the month were the busiest times at The Cabin. Those who were employed were under the age of 30. Through the almost two years of observation, I heard five of the men explicitly tell stories about beating or abusing their spouse. All but four of the regulars were married. Interestingly, most of the players were distantly related or “family.” Within the Filipino community, who one considers part of their family changes constantly. Although blood ties are the easiest to distinguish, a close friend, second cousin, or wife of one’s cousin-in-law can take the title of being in your “family.” This very loose and far-reaching network is what allowed The Cabin to survive. That is, the network of individuals was so vast there was always a large pool of regular players. And, because they were “family,” trust and confidentiality issues were rare.

Winning seems to be a point of emphasis when comparing individuals in the group to each other and when comparing their cultural Filipino group to others. That is, racism plays a large role as a motivating factor for the players who visit The Cabin. Many of these players
frequent the Casinos in Indiana, but cite "stupid Niggers and White people" as the primary reason they do not enjoy their experiences there.

‘Blacks and Whites are dumb when it comes to gambling ... How many Orientals do you see playing slots or bingo?\textsuperscript{55} None because they knew that's a waste of money. Look at the best players in the World Series of Poker ... Mostly Orientals, because they're smart,’ Scott said as he threw down a card during a game of Tong-its.

Racism against Blacks and Whites takes many forms at The Cabin, mostly in verbal exchanges and anecdotal stories about things happened at the Casino, but also in the total exclusion of them from The Cabin. When asked of the thought of having other minorities play at The Cabin, Oscar replied, ‘Well, if they're not dumb and can be trusted, but that’s exactly why they're not here.’

WE’RE JUST AS GOOD

Other dens, though racially and ethnically diverse, practiced a different form of racism; namely, at the Blue Horn. Theirs was more covert, and racial superiority played out in forms of talk. Racial differentiation varied significantly by age group. The men who spent time at the Blue Horn were largely an older generation and not as receptive to the newcomers. Ranging in age from 50 to 93, they viewed others by ethnic or racial backgrounds. More so than other European ethnic groups, Italian males seek validation of their manhood through all-male associations and clubs (Weibel-Orlando 2008). The Blue Horn was just one of many Italian social clubs sprinkled around the city. Racial epithets were common, often in Italian, though not necessarily viewed as derogatory by those who committed the offense. Johnny’s favorite word was “moulignon,” a crude word for a Black person, derived from melanzane- the Italian word for eggplant.

\textsuperscript{55} While true that not many Asian males play slots or bingo, it is incredibly popular among Asian women. Buses that service Atlantic City from Chinatown are filled with Asian women who end up spending the day in front of slot machines.
Moulignon was not directed at Black persons only; he would use it whenever he thought someone was being stupid. In his mind, Johnny didn’t equate moulignon with racism or racial hierarchy, but rather as a slang word to describe someone who was being foolish. Though not always the case, most of the bettors who were Italian had a higher cap or no cap at all. Comparatively, those of non-Italian ancestry had a shorter leash, especially when it came to lines of credit.

In contrast, those who spent time at the Pinot were a younger generation, ranging in age from 17 to 46. They seemed oblivious to the changing demographics or, at the very best, didn’t care. Many of them worked in blue-collar occupations alongside various ethnic groups and found a sense of solidarity through labor. They viewed their work as laborious, as demanding to their bodies, and judged other bettors in terms of labor choice, not ancestry. The lines were divided by the work you did, not by where your parents came from.

Ronan, an Italian immigrant, who came over in 1991, was caught between both worlds. On the one hand, he had a lot in common with the older generation and appreciated talk of the old country. On the other, he was in his 30s and had more of the same interests and views as the younger crowd. Often, he told me he was working for nothing, working for the same things ‘those guys’ were, and running into the same problems.

The biggest divide among the population at The Cabin is age. The ‘Kids,’ as they were known in the den, are those under 30, while the ‘Old-Schoolers’ are those players over 30. The Kids show up with much less frequency averaging four times per month. In contrast, the Old-Schoolers show up approximately twice a week, double their younger counterparts. Of more interest are the types of games played by the different generations. The only game played by the Kids is Texas Hold ‘Em poker. This is largely due to the fact that their generation was clearly
more socialized into American culture, and was exposed to poker from their peers more than they were to mahjong.

With regard to behavior, bragging after winning and talking about the game was dialogue usually relegated to the younger population. While many of the older players did talk and brag, it was rarely to a defeated opponent or about gambling at all. The bragging done by the Old Schoolers was materialistic in nature, such as “Did you see my new car?” or “My new TV is twice the size of the one here.” Despite the difference in content of their bragging, each group seemed to achieve the same thing: both forms expressed a player’s skill and prowess as being superior to others. The primary difference was with the younger generation, the link between their skill and the outcome of the game was much more explicit (“You played the last hand like shit”), whereas the Old Schoolers tended to attack the individual on a personal level (“That’s why you drive that piece of shit Honda”). The latter inferred their bad decisions in life equated to their level of play.

The level of socialization was markedly different between the generations. Kids tended not to socialize, as their focus and concern lie with the game. They didn’t stick around to eat or drink and, once finished with the game, they cashed out and left. At tables with Old Schoolers, there was much more talk, often times not about gambling but to complain about the recession, President Obama, or Filipino news. The older generation made an event of the day by eating, drinking, and talking for much longer periods of time (averaging 9.75 hours at The Cabin versus 4.5 hours for the Kids). Because of this, Kids tended not to utilize the full services offered at The Cabin, but primarily came to play poker.

Filipino culture influences the behavior of the two generations. Younger players did not try to engage with the older group, as it would be seen as disrespectful. That is, it would appear
as an attempt to make someone older (and thus of higher status) equal to oneself. Even more
telling was the large divide between these groups caused by generational differences. The Kids,
with the advent of televised poker on ESPN, see their gambling as a recreational activity and
sport. As Sam, a younger player put it, ‘There's really no difference for me coming here and
playing than going to someone else's house to watch a movie, it’s just fun.’

This comment is salient because when asking another player to comment on the rift
between the older and younger population, another young player, Jonah, responded ‘I am not
really sure why we don't play together, we're just as good at these games as them.’

This highlights an interesting contradiction. Younger players believe their play and
gambling is merely a form of recreation with nothing at stake; however, this recreation is also a
source of an important legitimacy for them with regard to the elders. Their proficiency in a game,
according to the latter player's comment, would enable a large group cohesion, or at the very
least a recognition of a player's skill regardless of age.

Contrary to this, the older generation of players view their age as their badge and
indication of their skill. The most common criticism from the Old Schoolers of the Kids is
embodied in a comment by Oscar and is wholly telling of their views:

‘These kids think they know everything and they are good at everything, especially the
ones born here ... because they win they think they understand life.’

The first dynamic we see is the conflict and animosity between the Kids born in the U.S.
and the Old Schoolers born in the Philippines. Since The Cabin is a cultural space, dominated by
traditional Filipino cultural roles, the younger players: do not recognize this, do not care for this,
and have a hard time conforming to this standard. Therefore, tension between groups result from
their cultural background and the group's inability to reconcile with their new location. The older
players cannot grapple with their kids’, relatives’, or neighbors’ Filipino-American identity, and the younger generation has no real reverence or respect for the traditional one.

Next, Oscar’s comments also hint at what gambling means to the majority of players at The Cabin. First, because these men are unemployed, money made from gambling is their income. That is, they view their gambling as work. This is explicitly stated when players say before a game is started "It’s time to go to work" or when they are on the phone they tell a caller they are "working.” Therefore, skill for them is not just something that comes along as you play, but something wholly necessary before you can really be considered a player. In addition to being a source of income for many of these men it also has significant meaning. By equating winning to life, gambling well is the actual act of living well. This may be slightly contrasted with a Goffmanian perspective which views gambling and play as a vehicle through which individuals can show and act out their true character. That is, winning is not enough to say that someone is a good player. This is not to say that winning does not have its positive place at The Cabin.

**HOLDING YOUR OWN TO A HIGHER STANDARD**

The most varied betting den was New City. Freddie was my only African American bookie, and many of his clients were men of color. New City's population was diverse, particularly by Chicago standards. 51st Street was a dividing line, separating Hispanics to the north and African Americans to the south. East of Halsted and North of 47th Street was a small pocket of what Freddie called the "Leftovers"-an ethnic White population who had been in the area since the days of the Stockyards. While the community area was once predominately White ethnic, it now was Hispanic and African American, and Freddie was happy to service 'his community.'
African American gambling in Chicago and other urban centers has a unique history compared to White ethnic gambling. Policy games dominated the South Side of Chicago and were run by what Freddie calls “The Black Mafia.” Despite most historians’ view that African Americans were not involved in organized crime, the reality in many cities was to the contrary. A policy game, also known as the numbers game, can best be described as a lottery. The bettor will choose three numbers in the hopes of matching them to the numbers drawn at random. Just as in sports betting, there is a bookie who takes the bets, collects money, and pays out. Policy games often used kids from the neighborhood as ‘runners,’ people who would transport the money and betting slips. Although betting amounts were minimal (ranging from a penny to a few dollars), the total amount raked in from such games was huge. Chicago’s political machine benefitted from the game as aldermen received cuts and campaign contributions. Freddie spoke of what used to happen in the communities back in the day.

‘These brothers had a kingdom set up. All they did was have someone pull numbers from the wheel. They were pulling millions! And they were giving job opportunities to people who had none. The nigger pool brought us money!’

Because of how expansive the policy games were, many people were afforded jobs in communities otherwise depleted of economic resources. Freddie was at once proud of his race’s control and embarrassed by the type of gambling it was: policy games are pure luck. There is no skill, knowledge, or understanding needed to play. Freddie distinguished this type of ‘play’ with what he and his bettors performed.

Although Freddie claimed he didn't care what 'color' you were as long as you had a 'wad,' he was much stricter with other African Americans. When Lavon was caught lifting money from

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56 Others, too, have referred to it as such. See Francis Ianni’s book ‘Black Mafia: Ethnic Succession in Organized Crime,’ 1974.
57 A pejorative term some people use to refer to the policy game.
the register, Freddie banned him and his brother Lamar. Lamar was allowed to come back after five months, but Lavon is still excommunicated. Benny, a White Irish-American, on the other hand, never seemed to even be chastised by Freddie, despite racking up a $10,000 gambling debt. Freddie made sure other bettors were around when he chewed out an African American bettor for not paying quickly enough. His desire to appear impartial towards his bettors actually ended up hurting some of the clients. In truth, Freddie expected more and held 'his own' to a higher standard. He also felt it was a personal betrayal rather than a lazy bettor not wanting to pay out. This was similar to Johnny in Montclare, Sal in Park Slope, and Pete in Chinatown. All had higher expectations for their own ethnic group.

Lamar's grandfather was a porter for Pullman railcars, and was part of the first all-Black union, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. He was proud of his grandfather, and felt he was a part of Chicago history. He related to Freddie and they had a shared social history often ignored by historians. He was frustrated by his cap, and thought it unfair. Freddie thought Lamar still needed to prove himself, especially after his brother Lavon was caught stealing. For Freddie, holding other African Americans to a higher standard was his way of protecting 'his people.’ If he cut them slack on payments or credit lines, they were likely to fall into massive debt quickly; that was the last thing he wanted and so he became a strict taskmaster, and an entirely different bookie than he was to those of other races or ethnicities.

While Pete, Sal, and Johnny also felt more protective of their ethnic groups, there wasn’t a sense of responsibility in the same way held by Freddie. Of course, the historic institutional racism, discrimination, and segregation practices for African Americans are unparalleled, and therefore more reason to be safeguarding.
While Alba (1990) argues there has been a renegotiation of white ethnic identity—a lumping of all White-European decedents under one unified European-American umbrella—I found an observance of specific ethnic grouping in the gambling dens. Rather than utilize the social benefit of a wider base of White-ethnic versus non-White ethnic, men at the den saw ethnic identification as a social support. The sense of small group belonging was an attachment that helped create an identity. As immigration from Europe has all but trickled, larger society has come to view White-European ancestry as a singular group. The men in the dens wanted to make ethnic distinctions and feel a sense of communal ties to their own group. They wanted to celebrate not just ethnicity as a symbolic entity, but ethnicity as part of their social structure.

FRAMING THE DEN

The gambling den can be viewed as a small group in society; it is dependent on face-to-face interaction and is recognized by members as a meaningful social unit (Fine & Harrington 2004). Despite Putnam’s (1995) lament that we are bowling alone, the gambling den thrives as men come in not merely to bet but to find a shared social space. It helps men dust off the alienation of larger society, the monotony of the workplace, and align themselves with a community. Within these small groups, it is important to understand how members explain and make sense of their reality. In other words, the framing the gambling den, as put forth initially by Goffman (1974) and later Gonos (1977). In the gambling dens, the prevailing ideology is to frame betting as a leisure pastime, the same way visiting a pub or going to the theater is seen.

Men view the performance of sports betting not as part of a deviant script, but as a way to consume. Further, the den is framed in a legal establishment that helps to reinforce legitimacy with the bettors and bookies. Within the frame, there is a ‘key’ found in all gambling dens: emasculating another bettor. To those outside the group, group talk where one emasculates
another may not be understood as group play. In the den, the social group understands this emasculation is jovial in nature, and meant to solidify members of the group. As Goffman suggests, for keying to take place, participants must understand an alteration has occurred; thus, it further reinforces insider versus outsider status. A keying such as emasculation, performs ‘a crucial role in determining what it is we think is going on’ (p. 45) in the gambling den. This keying allows group members to recognize placement of others within a social space.

In Bay Ridge, the den is often filled with non-bettors who engage with bettors. John is a practical joker. A NYPD detective, it is hard to believe one with such a serious job is such a prankster, but there is nothing more John enjoys in the den then ribbing another bettor. Often times, John will emasculate Dennis, another policeman, in front of the group (including non-bettors). Outsiders see this talk as cruel or unnecessary, while Dennis and other insiders see this as a confirmation of Dennis’ status. While John may rib someone in jest or seriously (as he may do with Saul), it is only the members who can differentiate the keying. Thus, the utterances make aware the participants within the frame a transformation has occurred.

Within small groups, status and reputation are shaped by the cultural norms and expectations within the frame. This in turn creates a social mapping of other members, locating each bettor within a network, helping to define positions of power and influence (Bales 1969).

There is a marked difference between gambling at a casino versus gambling with a bookie. It is not only a matter of local versus non-local, but of standardization versus specialization. Casino gambling is standardized, formulaic, and consumption is not demarcated by class, sex, or race. Betting with a bookie is a specialized consumption, demanding knowledge, masculinity, and an adherence to working-class norms and values. However, one of the den’s remarkable features is its ability to accept a heterogeneous class base. Unlike so many other third
spaces in urban neighborhoods (bars, clubs, salons, theaters), the gambling dens are not singular in class. It provides a space for men of varying class groups to come together and celebrate sport, heroism, risk, loss, manhood, and of course, the action.
Chapter 7: Conclusion: Gambling in Society

**TO TAKE (HISTORICAL) ACTION**

Gambling in the United States is big business; from casinos to keno machines at restaurants to lottery tickets to sports betting, Americans love to make a wager. It is, one could argue, in our cultural blood: we are explorers and risk-takers, always looking for the next big thing around the corner. But not all gambling is created equal: the century’s-plus legislation has happily permitted some forms of gambling while demonizing others as morally bankrupt. Recently, casinos received facelifts and now attempt to engage every member of the family; television commercials play soft sounds of the ‘60s and remind you to buy a state lottery ticket;\(^{58}\) billboards along the expressway let you know what exit to take for Native American-run casinos in Wisconsin. We as a culture cannot seem to decide if we despise or if we idolize the practice.

From the early 1940s to the 1970s, cities such as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles banned pinball, as legislatures claimed it was a game of chance, not skill, and thus a form of gambling. They also believe it to be mafia-run and dangerous to the impressionable youth.\(^{59}\) In 1993, an article proclaimed “Bible Belt Meets Money Belt as Casinos Sprout Up in Dixie” (Sullivan 1993). In 1999, a Gallup Poll showed 75% of adults supported gambling in the form of lotteries to help raise state revenue. Like all vices, morality takes a backseat when economics are involved. Revenue not just from lotteries but also from casinos was such a draw that forty-three states now have lotteries, while forty-two states have casinos. By 2000, 95% of Americans lived within a 3 to 4 hour drive from a casino (Rogers 2005).

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\(^{58}\) In Southern California, a state lottery advertisement runs frequently using the hit “California Dreamin’” by The Mamas and The Papas released in 1965.

\(^{59}\) New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia wrote in a Supreme Court affidavit.
Through a century, our schizophrenic views and legislation on gambling have never wavered on one key aspect: bookmaking as a form of betting. From the outset to present day, bookmakers have garnered national attention. While there was a question of public morality and gambling even before the turn of the century, the end of Prohibition in 1933 until the early 1970s is when bookmaking hit a morality apex. It was the era of moral panic—by the media, police, public, and politicians (Cohen 1972). Estimates of bookmakers’ business earnings in the 1940s range from 3 to 10 billion dollars. Federal, state, and local authorities clamored to draw attention to this ‘national evil.’ This, in large part, was due to the link between organized crime, the mafia, and betting. In Paul S. Deland’s words “Gangsters and racketeers have seized and organized gambling…and have made it such a menace to good government and society…” (Deland 1950). Public outcry against the mafia and gambling intensified across the United States.

Whyte’s seminal work on organized crime in Boston showed an in-depth look at police protection of gambling operations (Whyte 1943). The 1951 Kefauver Commission cited illegal gambling as the most important activity of organized crime. Of course, there was also a growing concern of organized crime’s affiliation with not just local authorities, but politicians in Washington. Starting in 1970, the Knapp Commission began an investigation of the New York Police Department and found in one precinct, 24 out of 25 vice officers were taking payments from local gamblers. In 1970, former President Nixon signed into law the Organized Crime Control Act, prohibiting the creation or management of a gambling organization of five or more

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60 The opening of the Saratoga Race Track in New York in the 1860s led to a prominence of bookmakers.
61 “Betting and Gambling: A National Evil, 1904, edited by B.S. Rowntree was an attempt to examine how destructive betting had become in the United States.
62 Commission to Investigate Alleged Police Corruption
persons if said organization accrued $2,000 in gross revenue in a single day or had been in business for more than 30 days.

By the late 1970s, the enforcement of anti-gambling measures subsided. In 1960, there were an estimated 145,000 gambling arrests nationwide; by 1980, the number had decreased to 38,000.\(^\text{63}\) Local police moved attention to other issues, as did the federal government, and so the bookie fell out of the spotlight. Despite all these efforts by authorities, the bookie did not disappear; rather than become extinct, he thrived in communities across the country. Like all moral panics, a legacy, both informal and institutional, remains. The organized crime’s affiliation with gambling from the first half of the twentieth century influences bookmaking a half-century later. Despite incredible lengths to legalize various forms of gambling—slots, table games, bingo, and lottery—bookmaking remains illegal in all states except Nevada. It remains a sore spot in the gambling sphere, and it was the moral crusades of the past that influence our present. The remnants exist today not in reality but in film and television.

While pre-1970s bookies were part of a much larger network of organized crime, particularly the Italian mafia, post-1970s bookies are self-employed entrepreneurs. While each bookie’s business may not seem astronomical in profit, they are beholden to no one and can maintain a low radar. Gambling only became an issue when it breached public morals or was conducted openly to create a public nuisance (Ploscowe 1950). Thus, the severance between the local bookie and large-scale mafia actually benefitted the bookie. Less attention is drawn and fewer outcries from the public occur. They are not pulled in front of Senate Committees or vilified on the nightly news. This is a key component not just to a bookie’s self-identity, but also to the community’s identity of the bookie.

\(^{63}\) Source: *Uniform Crime Reports*. 
DAZZLE AND DISARM: ZONING CONSUMPTION

The role of bookmakers in urban communities cannot be fully analyzed without looking at larger structural transformations of gambling. Throughout U.S. history, the bookmaker has been stigmatized, criminalized, and vilified, even during periods of deregulated gambling. Thus, there was no rise and fall of the bookie in society, as he has always appeared on the margins of society. We have, however, seen mass transformations of gambling regulation broadly speaking. In the 1990s, there was regulation in the form of the passage of PASPA, while at the same time a revitalization of Las Vegas occurred. The Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992 effectively banned sports betting across the nation (with the exclusion of a few states), in a century's old attempt to eradicate the bookie. The earliest approach we took to gambling was a puritanical perspective (Aasved 2003), in line with other puritanical movements of the day (Prohibition as an example). Yet, we have failed to move beyond this moralistic approach when it comes to the bookie. We continue to zone this form of consumption far differently than we do other gambling types, so much so that we now call casinos (including slot and table play) 'gaming' rather than gambling.

Las Vegas' initial revitalization of The Strip (the main hub of casinos) began in the 1990s. The newly built Excalibur hotel and casino marked a shift to promote the city as family-friendly. Additionally, MGM Grand, Luxor, and Treasure Island were all erected, creating a dizzying display of spectacle in the form of gambling consumption. By 1995, Freemont Strip (downtown Las Vegas) underwent revitalization, and a Hard Rock Hotel was built, billed as "the world's first rock 'n' roll hotel and casino." By 1999, the city had once again reinvented itself; having grasped the family market, they moved to the luxury market: Steve Wynn made the

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64 When I speak of a Las Vegas transformation, I am speaking specifically of the strip and the casinos within it. Although Vegas has seen considerable population growth and numerous businesses relocate there, it is really the gaming industry that received a facelift.
Bellagio a reality, The Venetian replicated a favorite Italian city, followed shortly by The Paris Hotel, an homage to everyone's favorite French city. Advertisements targeted every market: Circus Circus for the kids, The Forum Shoppes at Caesar’s Palace for the wives, Spago for the foodies, the Bellagio tables for the serious high roller. If you attended a bachelor party in the 1990s, there was a good chance it was in Las Vegas; hotels like Planet Hollywood and Hard Rock, with their affordable room rates and central location, encouraged men to come, play, gamble, and drink with the reminder "What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas."

Encouragement came from all ends-the gaming board, state and local authority, and media all jumped on the gaming bandwagon. Family vacations and Japanese tourists alike were welcomed with open, neon arms. Long gone were the associations of the Rat Pack and Bugsy Siegel. There was no 'type' who used Las Vegas as their playground; from lower to upper class individuals and groups, there was something for everyone on The Strip.

Las Vegas wasn't the only city expanding gaming: Wisconsin Indian Reservation casinos, Illinois Mississippi riverboat casinos, and of course, Atlantic City, all tried to acquire a piece of the multi-billion dollar industry that is gambling. Dazzle and disarm seemed to be the rallying cry for these zones of consumption.

Despite these larger shifts in stripping the wicked out of gambling, the bookie remained in the seedy underworld. The more society celebrated gambling, the more they created a bifurcation between 'good' gambling (regulated casinos) and 'bad' gambling (unregulated sports betting with local bookies). This is the perception on a structural level, a far different estimation than what was held by residents on a community level. At the micro-level, not only did residents seem less fearful of a bookie, he didn't even register on their radar. Instead, issues with their community such as potholes, litter, gang violence, drug use, prostitution, unemployment and low
wage work were concerns. The bookie, in residents' eyes, seemed laughable by comparison. Even older residents thought more about trash pick up than the potential presence of a bookie in their neighborhood. Those who were aware of a bookie's presence were either: unhappy but apathetic; believed he was like everyone else in the neighborhood; or believed his role as bookie was secondary to the larger role he fulfilled in the community.

MEASURING MANHOOD

Just as Conzen (1979) argues proximity does not automatically mean ethnic identity, I too argue proximity does not guarantee masculinity. Being in the den around other males does not automatically afford bettors masculine status. It is something to be attained, through performance, talk, and behaviors; even more, achieving masculinity in the den is the highest reward for bettors. Losses and wins occur frequently in sports betting; one cannot gauge another by record. But, one can measure manhood through reliable calculation, and bestow or remove status of other bettors based on these measurements. To be in the company of other men, to have a space of one’s own, to engage in homosociality…it is the key to why men continue to frequent the dens. Yet not everyone who wishes to enter may do so, and once in, it is a constant performance to maintain masculinity.

While a bettor’s manhood is tested routinely, the bookie is exempt from such assessments. His is the ultimate definition of a masculine self, and his authority extends beyond control of business, but of control of what defines masculine behavior. The fact that all eleven bookmakers saw themselves as working-class meant standards of masculinity were drawn from normative beliefs of this class: value of the corporeal, strength, heterosexuality, traditional female roles, limited emotional expression, risk, and taking loss. All are highly valued and used
as markers for sizing up another bettor. And because the bookie dictates how masculinity is defined, the bettors fall in line with these standards.

The working-class standards of masculinity vary slightly by each bookie location due to racial or ethnic composition. For Johnny in Montclare, Sal in Park Slope, and Frank in West Town, all were Italian-American, both culturally and symbolically. Their displays of affection towards other men, when not taken in a cultural context, appeared effeminate. With relatives or close friends, they often hugged or kissed on the cheek, signals generally associated with non-masculine behavior. However, in these dens, it was accepted as normative masculine behavior because it was culturally appropriate.

Similarly, Oscar’s acceptance of, and at times enthusiasm of, female abuse and exploitation was not in line with the traditional working-class belief of protecting the ‘fairest sex.’ Yet, from a cultural context, Filipinos adhere to a strict traditional gender code, whereby the female is subordinate and submissive to her husband or other male figure. Many of the men (in fact the majority) in The Cabin were unemployed and used their wives’ earnings to gamble. In other dens, this would be viewed as the ultimate transgression; not being able to provide financially for a family was a crucial component to manhood. The men in other dens, while not prideful of their work per se, garnered enormous self-esteem from being the breadwinner in the household. In The Cabin, the men viewed it as a sign of superiority and intelligence; that they could spend their days gambling and socializing while their wives labored showed their dominance over women and their rank in the household.

Vinny and Paul, two of the younger bookies, also had the youngest bettors on average. Thus, age played a role in defining expectations of manhood. By far, these two dens had the highest levels of what I would label ‘modern masculinity.’ They were more agreeable to notions
of equality in relationships, placed less emphasis on bodily strength in labor, and their tolerance of male homosexuality was higher than at other dens. Though James in Bay Ridge was young, much of his clientele were older than he.

Accordingly, while the gambling dens reinforce notions of traditional, heteronormative masculinity, there is not a singular form of masculine behavior. Rather, one’s class, race, and age inform acceptable practices of masculinity. These, of course, intersect with each other, as they do in all aspects of life. The bookie’s race and class, and his values of masculine behaviors, imbue the den with the appropriate practices. The bettor’s social position within the den is hierarchized by how well he can aspire to this form of masculinity. The social position of a bettor is not static, naturally, and the value of his masculinity is based on a series of actions, modes of talk, and behavioral cues compiled throughout his time in the den. Just as one can win big from taking action on a Tuesday and lose big from action on a Friday, so too can a bettor gain and lose masculinity. No bettor in the den is protected from being devalued in his manhood. As a result, a positive presence in the gambling dens is work; effort and care must be taken constantly to ensure he is always ‘winning.’

**THERE’S A LADY PRESENT**

While I do not believe a man could have done a better ethnography of bookies, I do believe he would have had a much different experience, and therefore potentially different conclusions would have been drawn. I spent five years in the company of men, solely men, across three cities in eleven locations. I showed up consistently and did my best to be invisible. Needless to say, when the ‘other’ in such a homogeneous space, invisibility can be downright impossible. At 4’10”, my height already made me conspicuous; add to that my long hair and breasts, and it was inevitable I would be noticed. Within a month of working with my first
bookie, I realized there was nothing I could do to blend in, barring taping my breasts down, lowering my voice, and shaving my head. On multiple occasions, the older generation would chastise ‘the kids’ for remarks made, saying, “There’s a lady present.” While I don’t consider myself particularly feminine, the men drew a line in the sand, and because I was a woman, I was a lady.

Working exclusively with males was a learning curve. There is a difference between feeling comfortable with the opposite sex and learning how to consistently be the only representative of your sex in a social space. Although I do not generally wear heels, skirts, or other feminine outfits, I dressed as drably as I could for most of my work: sweatshirts, high necklines, jeans, and PF Flyers. I say most of my work because I must admit to dressing ‘pleasing’ for the first month or until a bookie agreed to work with me. Perhaps a cheap tactic, and perhaps it made no difference, but I do not think it hurt the situation. Once he agreed to work with me, I backed away from any revealing clothes, as the persistent harassment from bettors was too much to handle on a daily basis; it was also incredibly distracting to my work. If the men continued to see me as a ‘lady,’ there would always be an awareness of my presence for them. My attempt to minimize myself did work (in some gambling dens more than others), and after a while, the men eased up. Over time, I was bifurcated into one of two roles for the men: either they wanted to father me, or they wanted to fuck me. This was split fairly clearly down age lines. I think this is a natural response towards a woman who comes into a male, heterosexual, hypermasculinized space, and while I do not begrudge their attempts, nor was I in need of a father-figure or roll in the hey.

While some reading this may contest I do not demonize the men’s behaviors enough (or believe I let them off the hook), I do not think it is my job as an ethnographer to do so. Too

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65 I am certain it made no difference with Oscar and Pete.
often, I read works where the researcher has been granted the privilege (and it is a privilege) to join in the space and the result is a barrage of insults, critiques, and cultural impositions placed on the subjects. The men in the dens who I worked with were not perfect; some were quite brutal and difficult to be around. And while I do not agree with or celebrate some of the men’s values, beliefs, or actions, I do attempt to understand where they derive from and how they form over the course of a lifetime.

Certain times in the den were more wearing than others; certain dens were more difficult than others. I felt most safe in the Chicago dens, though I cannot provide a scientific reason why, but only say that it is my birth city, and my level of familiarity and comfort is higher there than any other location. The exception to that was the Lincoln Square den; it was my most trying and least safe place of work. Persistent talk of domestic abuse left a months-long pit in my stomach, and the lack of respect and very clear subordination towards me from the men was hard to swallow; keeping my mouth shut and not interfering in their lives was hardest of all. It was in The Cabin my sex worked against me the most, and had it not been for the fact that I was the owner’s son’s professor, I am quite certain I would have never been allowed in and daily situations would have been much worse. Los Angeles bookies were more difficult in general because I lacked legitimate transportation. During my initial six months in the city, I did not have a car and relied on the Los Angeles Metro buses. This made late night evenings difficult, as I had to find a ride home or leave early enough to catch the last bus. As well, my unfamiliarity with the city and my surroundings gave me a heightened sense of insecurity, both in and out of the dens. I was alone in a strange city; evening walks, something I took for granted, were curtailed after a
patron at the Echo Park den told me to be careful I didn’t end up in one of the water drums.\textsuperscript{66}

Though I now call it home, Los Angeles was a city-shock for me in many respects.

\textbf{DISPELLING THE MYTH}

When people asked what research I was conducting, most were excited, their eyes bulging and questions such as, “Have you met any mafia guys?” rampant. In truth, the role of a bookie is rather humdrum. An established bookie goes to work each day like any other, he takes and receives money for economic transactions, and at the end of the month, hopes to be in the black. This description is not meant to underscore certain dangers, risks, or significance in general of the bookmaker. Rather, it is said to dispel the most common myth I encountered during my work: that the bookie was a wise guy, broke legs if not paid, and part of a larger criminal organization. Every bookie I worked with was his own boss; his role and work were his own, and, with the exception of one singular event, I witnessed no violent acts perpetrated.

The only time I saw violence was in Park Slope. A visibly drug-addled man had come into the bar Lenny owned. One of the bettors recognized him as someone from the Gowanus Projects nearby. He was asked to leave, and he refused, his random shouts and epithets\textsuperscript{67} growing louder. Sal and three of the regular bettors walked him out. I stepped outside for a cigarette a minute later and rounded the corner to see them taking turns punching the man. He was in a weakened state to begin with, and with each punch they laid, the more broke he became. I shouted that the cops were coming and to leave him alone; I didn’t know what else to do, but I wanted them to stop hurting the man. They stopped and strolled back into the bar. While I am not certain, I do not think they stopped because they actually believed the police were coming, but rather because they felt embarrassed by my witness to their actions. When they had left, I asked

\textsuperscript{66} I lived next to the Los Angeles river, and I would often walk along the path at night. It was a haven for homeless persons and apparently disposing of bodies.

\textsuperscript{67} He repeatedly shouted, “I’m going to burn you motherfucking niggers down.”
the gentleman if he needed me to call an ambulance; he responded by telling me to ‘fucking choke on a cock.’ I left the situation at that, and went back to the bar. When I came back in, the men were laughing and regaling the other patrons with the event. The four men were triumphant, puffing their chests and finding humor in the situation; it was arguably the worst display of socialized masculinity I witnessed.\textsuperscript{68} That said, this was an isolated incident, and had no connection to the work of a bookie; his involvement was situational.

While the myth of a Mafioso bookie is just that, many of the bookies capitalized on this belief. It was to their advantage to have both the bettors and larger community (for those who were aware of the bookie’s identity) believe they had a crew of enforcers. If a bettor was skittish to pay up, he might think twice if he believed his bookie was someone capable of violence or affiliated with the mob. It was in the best interest of the bookie, however, to not handle disputes violently.

While most bookies had a level of protection from the police, it did not behoove them to call in favors and stir up trouble. Even when bookies have cops on their roll, it does not guarantee protection from all of the Police Department, and certainly doesn’t protect from federal authorities. As well, enforcing codes through violence shows that the bookie doesn’t have true authority. As Lucas explained to me, if you have to use a bat to get what you want, then a man doesn’t really respect you. Local bookies, particularly those today without the backing of a crime organization, must rely on reciprocal trust; their word and the bettor’s word that payments will be given when owed. A bettor who pays on time, no matter how much it hurts financially, does so because he respects the bookie. He also does this because he wants to remain part of the action. Action in this sense means not only laying down bets, but also being a part of the

\textsuperscript{68} I cried for over an hour that night. Even though I grew up around brutality, it was still painful to witness grown men prey on someone so weak.
gambling den. Further, each time a bettor doesn’t pay out is a strike against his masculine self. To not pay is to ‘pussy out,’ to not be ‘able to handle the action.’ Because the dens are so intimate, word of nonpayment spreads quickly and other bettors snap at the chance to judge. Similarly, a bookie pays out on time because it is his reputation on the line. Like any business, if you offer a bad product, people are sure to find an alternative source. Moreover, a bookie’s reputation is synonymous with his manhood; it is weak to not be true to your word, and to be weak is to be ineffective and not in control. Thereby, a bookie is most effective when clients want to pay on time; he is also effective when they believe in a threat of violence or being cut-off. That said, there were a few clients who didn’t pay on time, who ran up exorbitant credit lines, and who dodged their respective bookie.

COMMUNITY LOST? SPACE FOUND

Since the early days of urban sociology, there has been a terrible desire to bemoan the loss of community. As urbanization transformed the American landscape, sociologists worried all was lost. After nearly a century of literature spent fretting over where one was able to find a community in urban life, I remain puzzled as ever by this query. Community is everywhere in the city. It is at times scary (gang life), meaningful (neighborhood associations), racist (country clubs), whimsical (Harry Potter club), classist (rough pubs), and even sexist (the betting dens). But community in urban life has not vanished. The gambling dens are a community; they are a space for men to be men, to engage in masculine act and talk, to participate in homosociality, and to celebrate their class. The den provides many things for many people, but it is overwhelmingly a safe physical space for men. So often we read publications of women's fear, of limited space for women, of exclusive safe havens for women, yet rarely do we acknowledge that men, even those part of the heteronormative masculine group, need such spaces. Even more, we seem to
shrug off or devalue the men who have lost their space in the city; the skilled laborers, the blue-collar workers, the men who physically erected the cities we now want to use as our playground.

The communities I worked with and in had all, at one time or another, been working-class neighborhoods. Though some have gentrified (Lincoln Square and Echo Park for example), others remain rooted in the working-class culture (Jefferson Park). One of the principal issues here is those left behind struggle to hold on to what was their community. To that end, whether real or imagined, the men carve out their own working-class community through the space in the dens. The dens celebrate this class, and they are able to do so because bookmaking is so deeply entrenched in the working class. The dens become a physical manifestation of a symbolic desire to retain class-consciousness and identity. The working-class is not singular in thought, belief, or value; race, ethnicity, and age all intersect and play a part in how men come to view their class. They are a social group, engaged in community life, attempting to carve out a space for themselves.

The bookie provides, and controls, the space for men to come together. Winning money is not the dominant motivation for bettors. To gamble in the den is more than a mode of economic transaction; it is a bond between men, and helps to create insider versus outsider status. Those new to the gambling den or outsiders looking to become a part of the action develop the process of 'anticipatory socialization' (Merton 1949). The men carefully observe speech, behaviors, and actions of the other bettors. They begin to adopt the same values and beliefs as the den holds, and this is their way into the social group. Even clients must practice some form of anticipatory socialization, continually honing their attitudes and behaviors to ensure it is in line with the dominant group.

CONDUCTING COHESION
For a bettor to be successful in the den, he must follow codes of conduct set forth by the bookie. The authority the bookie holds allows him to define masculinity, as well as appropriate forms of behavior. 'Taking it' becomes a crucial aspect in how bettors judge one another, as well as what status a bookie bestows upon the bettor. To downplay emotional attachment to a piece of the action is rewarded by the group. Two behaviors that receive the strongest sanctions are: extreme emotion (particularly being a sore loser) and being cheap with winnings (not sharing).

Competition is of course present in the gambling den. While certain bettors like to compete against each other, most often the competition is "us" (the bettors) versus "him" (the bookie). The bookie helps to forge group attachment by focusing the attention on him ('he shaded the line' or 'he raised my line a half a point'). Bettors will often sympathize with each other, blaming the bookie for the deep loss.

**RESPECTABILITY & THE ALEATORY LIFE**

Admiration comes in many forms in the gambling den. When a bettor takes action through calculation and knowledge of the teams, the group rewards him. To reward another bettor is to offer up compliment ('you had Ramirez's injury pegged'), or a gesture (a nod or pat on the back), or an offering ('nice play-let me buy you a beer'). Admiration or respect of a bettor’s winnings only comes when the bettor has put thought into his bet. If a bettor wins by chance, there are no rewards and often-negative feelings from other bettors. To win by chance devalues the skill of sports betting. Chance games are 'women's games' in the eyes of the bettors; skill and competencies are esteemed, and seen as masculine traits.

Chance, needless to say, is ever-present in the gambling world. To bet is to take a risk with one's money--whether in the form of slot play, poker tables, blackjack, or sports betting. Yet most of these forms of chance have lost their true action, as Goffman lamented nearly half a
century ago (Goffman 1967). The corporatization of gambling has diminished risk, leaving little room for true uncertainty. The gambling dens, however, not only allow for chance, but also promote it. Chance is taken: by illegally betting with a bookie; by potentially not receiving your winnings from a bookie; by deciding to take action on a game; by laying your bet; and by performing properly in the den. All of these actions are a part of the "chanciness" (p. 158) of the den. Bettors receive positive sanctions when taking risk; it socializes them into the group and reaffirms their masculinity.

Chance serves another function in the gambling dens: it is the antidote to routinization. For many of the men, I observed feelings of boredom and apathy. This was true in the workplace (many of the men performed routinized labor) and in the home life (drudgery of family life). There was little if any autonomy they were able to express in the work and home space. Thus, it was in the third space, the gambling den, the men could escape from boredom. This third space was where the men really lived; it was where they came to life, where joking took place, and where needs of safety were met. Chancing it in the den—whether financially or status-wise—offered them the opportunity of serendipity they so desperately lacked in other areas of life. As Davis and others have shown, the working-class often recognizes they are trapped, with no opportunity or potential for advancement (Davis 1946). The men use the dens as a space to break free from the monotony.

**BLACKEN THE ARREST**

While the bulk of my work was ethnographic, I undertook a spatial methodology to further examine gambling in urban communities. The analysis of gambling arrests was fairly depressing. Looking at three years of data from the city of Chicago, patterns quickly emerged which showed incredible bias of: who was arrested and the type of gambling targeted. While
sports betting is sex-segregated, it is not exclusive to a particular class or race; within my work in the dens and from people I spoke with, there is no ‘type’ of bettor. From Asian to African American to Irish, upper class to the working poor, gambling cut across these divisions. Yet, the arrest rates for gambling show a very different story.

The overwhelming majority (92%) of gambling arrests occur in community areas with a median household income less than $40,000. Moreover, the bulk of gambling arrests (95.1%) occur along the West and South Sides of Chicago in predominately African American communities. This is in contrast to only 0.39% of arrests made in majority White communities. The police do not target White communities for gambling offenses, instead focusing on poor, African American communities. Further, the arrests are primarily for offenses that occur outdoors or in a public space (88.3%). While sports betting ran across all quadrants of the city and is big money, over 99.5% of gambling arrests made were for ‘dice games.’ These games, common among African American youth, are a low-wager (ten cents to a dollar) gamble by comparison to sports betting ($50 to $5,000 and up), yet they appear to be the focus of the police department’s time and resources. As well, the games are often played outdoors, making the gamblers easy targets for cops patrolling the streets. Thus, these gambles (and the persons playing them) are much quicker arrests for police.

Chicago’s racial history is not a pleasant one. From the race riots in 1919 to Gautreaux v. The CHA in 1969 to Dantrell Davis in 1992, the city’s relationship with its black residents has been combative. Today, residential segregation reigns, affecting not just home values, but educational opportunities, access to jobs, and safe streets. The hypersegregated areas of Chicago, unsurprisingly, are the same community areas that contain the majority of gambling arrests. The city remains the most segregated large city in the country, with a dissimilarity index of 91%
(Massey 1993). Just as in the 1960s, the South and West side neighborhoods face enormous difficulties: lack of legitimate work, concentrated poverty, and residents with criminal records, to which the gambling arrests attest. The hopelessness felt in these areas continues, as politicians and Chicagoans ignore these communities. Targeting Black youth for dice contributes to this problem: on one end, offenders are being put in the criminal system at a young age, tracking them for life; on the other end, these arrests are a part of a larger, structural issue, whereby the focus of police resources is concentrated in poor, Black neighborhoods for minor incivilities.

**THIS SPORTING LIFE**

Much sociological research has been done on the role of sport in society (Young 1986; Frey & Eitzen 1991; Washington & Karen 2001). Yet the analysis of sports betting within society remains sparse. Sport is revered in American society: the players are heroes, the spectators a social group, the game a symbol of strength and competition. Sport can be seen as a socializing process, especially for males, and it can also be viewed as a ritual which guides both players’ and spectators’ codes of conduct. Just as one should not underestimate the role sport plays as a cultural unifier, so too should one be aware of the power of sports betting as a unifying force in society.

In the gambling dens, bettors and bookies come together to partake in sporting events: from NFL to college basketball to Mixed Martial Arts, the men are invested in the game. The investment reaches beyond mere financial loss or profit, and includes investment in one’s own character. The men are not merely spectators, but neither are they players; they belong to their own social group of bettors. To be a part of this group is to prove yourself in many of the same ways sports players do: to be brave, competitive, knowledgeable, value muscul arity, and above all, to be a man. Despite huge strides in female sports, sports are still largely a man’s world. One
need only look at the paltry attendance of the WNBA\textsuperscript{69} to see how little interest society has for women in the sporting world. So too is this true of sports betting: it is a world of men. This is no surprise, of course, because the values transmitted through the world of sport are the same values transmitted in the dens; these celebrated attitudes and behaviors are rooted in masculinity.

The gambling dens allow a space for men across racial and class lines to come together as a social group. More so than other third spaces I have witnessed, the den cares least about one’s race; the status emphasized here is masculine behavior. Within the dens, the dominant social class that informs values is not the same dominant class we see in larger society. Instead, the working-class wear the crown, and those outside the class must adhere to their codes of conduct.

It should not be startling that the working-class is the dominant class in the gambling dens. Sport, despite being consumed by all classes, emphasizes traits most common among the working classes, such as corporeal strength and skill. As well, betting with a local bookie has historically been a lower or working-class venture. While upper and middle-classes have always counted gambling as part of their leisure activity, their consumption of it, and the space within it, was markedly different: horse tracks were divided spatially for the upper-class to consume at a distance; casinos provide private space for high-rollers; high stakes poker tournaments are invitation-only. To consume gambling as part of the upper-class was to consume it in a sanitized, safe space. Those unable to consume in such a way found themselves in off-track betting caves or a bookie’s den.

While the bookie has expanded his clientele to include men of all races and classes, the upper-class leisure spaces have remained segregated. They have, in fact, become more exclusive. No longer enough to have sectioned-off areas for high-rollers, many casinos now have private

\textsuperscript{69} In 2012, the WNBA averaged 7,457 in attendance.
rooms for the players. During one of my trips to Las Vegas, I watched a high-stakes poker game in a suite at Planet Hollywood; the buy-in was $50,000, and the space beyond glamorous.

**ENGAGING IN THE SOCIAL**

For sports bettors to consume in the den is to actively choose to be a part of the gambling den. Today, there is no shortage of options to bet on sports. The Internet has provided hundreds of sites to place bets in the comfort and safety of your own home. The ease with which one can provide a credit card, coupled with the legal loopholes of online betting, leads one to wonder why anyone would not bet this way.

But the den provides more than a place to lay your favorite. It offers a community, the chance to be a part of a social group, a third space for men to celebrate and commiserate, a space for the working-class to engage in leisure, and to escape the ennui of daily life. Gambling can be many things for many people, and in the gambling dens, it is far less a routine of betting and far more a sacred ritual among men. The ritualistic process that takes place in the dens joins the individual to a larger community.

**(RE)CONNECTING TO THE COMMUNITY**

I was at the bar in Jefferson Park, having consistently been present for the past two months, when an old friend of mine from high school showed up. We both did a double take and then uneasily squinted at each other from a few feet away. I hadn’t seen Gabe in seven years and was unsure if he was one of the bettors or just a patron at the bar. Finally, he approached me and we did a quick catch-up. I learned he was, in fact, at the bar to bet. When we were younger, I hadn’t known how heavy of a bettor he was; it wasn’t until our conversation that night I discovered how long and heavily he had bet. He asked me if I remembered Peter, and I said vaguely.
He nodded. “We were in high school and started playing and they were older guys. But not as high stakes. And then I remember playing when I was at the first semester of McCormick College at Elmhurst where I would play all night and I didn’t go home. Would just drive to school for one class then drive back, go to El Burrito, eat El Burrito, and then go to sleep and that was it. I mean, it wasn’t really—it wasn’t a lot of money. They played crazy stupid frivolous games, just fucking games where there was one game where if you wanted it there would be five cards and if you wanted to see the middle card you’d have to come up with the chip and if somebody had the chip, somebody would have to match the money that was still in the pot.”

“I don’t understand,” I said.

“I don’t know. It was just like stupid gambling games where the pot could grow five times over again and people would have to—you’d have to go into debt to have some...yea they weren’t skilled games.”

“But what’s the thing with the gun? I don’t understand. Was that at Pete’s house?” I asked. Earlier, Gabe had mentioned a gambling incident that involved a gun, but somewhere along the way, was sidetracked.

“No, that was Pete’s cousin. That was a real game at the social club. That was an experience. The kid Ricky is a criminal so he always has a gun supposedly. But he...we went to get the pizza and there’s his fucking Glock right on the table. It’s hysterical.” Bringing a gun to a pizza parlor was amusing to Gabe. He viewed this as another marker of manhood; that he took the situation so lightly showed his disregard for the seriousness of the situation.

“What kind of criminal? Like a dealer?” I said.

“Well, he owned a pawn shop and sold drugs for a long time. He’s generally a criminal. He’s a nice guy—I see him at Waterhouse now all the time, nice but...”
“Right. Criminal.” I said. “That’s crazy. Were you one of the younger people at the social club? Cause I was gonna say—weren’t most of those guys like middle aged?”

“Yea. They were all old. They were a lot of Asian. I couldn’t believe it.”

“At the social club?” I asked.

“Yea, they’d let them in cause they took them from the boat. That’s where they’d break up the game there by stealing the customers from the boat. All of them, yea, they didn’t care where they stole ‘em from. And the good news is that the boat, if you play, they take five dollars a hand, maximum. It’s five percent up to five dollars. Every pot. That’s a lot of money if you’re doing 20 to 30 hands an hour—that’s $150 bucks. So this guy would do it for $3, and provide even better food.”

Siphoning gambling players from legitimate casino spaces was a way to keep business growing. If the bookies could entice players by offering better deals than the casino, the bettors would go to them. The space of a casino—with its glitz and scantily-clad women—wasn’t enough to keep serious bettors, or their money, in place. The site of consumption is secondary to the type of action one can have.

“Wait—they’d provide food? At the social club?” I was confused by Gabe’s comments and it didn’t help that he had taken a bump of cocaine.

“Great, great food. They’d get all sorts of shit.”

“The one on Belmont? They charge you for it?”

“No! All that shit was taken care of. You gotta understand. Here’s how it worked. 20 hands an hour is a minimum. And at least $3 a hand. That’s $60 an hour. Times 10 hours—that’s $600 bucks. Guaranteed. You spend two hundred...this game wouldn’t just go for 10 hours—sometimes they’d try to keep it for two or three days. Two or three days. They would have—they
would have a list of people—I’m not joking—they would have a list of people they’d start calling when the game would start drying up. They’d try to get anybody in there at any time of the day just to keep the game going. Last three days.” Gabe was frustrated by my inability to immediately understand how the money accrued. He sighed frequently as he spoke, and it made me keenly aware of my incompetence. As I had known Gabe for over 15 years, I knew his mentality towards women was very traditional in value; his mom still did his laundry and he expected his future wife to take over the role.

“I just can’t believe they had Asians. At an Italian Social Club? I mean, most of those guys are pretty…” I stopped before I could say the offensive thing I was thinking in my head.

“Yea, that’s what I couldn’t believe. They trusted them though. They had to.”

“But you didn’t pay an entrance fee?” I asked.

“Dude, they were making $60 bucks…every time they moved they made three bucks. They had a dealer. Realistically, they were probably getting 25 to 30 hands an hour. That’s a lot of money. It was a lot.” I asked if they had a few tables or just one. Gabe told me they had two tables and some machines.

“What do you mean-like Keno?”

“No, the Cherry Master shit,” he said.

I asked why he stopped playing and came over here, and he told me he didn’t want to drive to Indiana anymore because of work. I didn’t understand.

Gabe explained, “I didn’t like Aurora70 and I didn’t like home games. The weird thing about home games was even if it’s like a real game it’s a weird thing if you go there and win and you just want to leave.”

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70 The casino in Aurora.
By home game, Gabe was referring to an Italian social club about two miles from the bar we were sitting in. He said, “Yea, technically it’s not a casino game cause it’s weird cause if you win a bunch of money and you leave there’s always a strange vibe—even in a place like that.” He explained to me it wasn’t about being social; it was about giving people an opportunity to win their money back.

“At a casino, there’s a list of people waiting to get in so somebody can bring in fresh money. They know exactly how much you walked in with.” I asked if he thought they kept count, and without missing a beat, he nodded his head. “They know. Just in case the box is short at the end of the night they know how much everybody came in with.”

I asked if he knew how many people ran it, and Gabe said he knew Joe and one other guy; both Italian and fresh off the boat. One was Sicilian and the other Italian, and that distinction was important for us both. Gabe mentioned that kids who weren’t even Italian used to come in and play at the clubs, as it became a trendy thing to do. I asked if he used to play with a guy we both knew in high school, and he said yes, at least two times a week.

“We had a lot of people, he said. You had to have cash. There was no line of credit. You could get credit at the other place, but you didn’t want it.”

“Cause you were hitting interest like crazy?”

“Yea, just from the people you’re getting it from—you didn’t want it.”

I asked about a mutual acquaintance of ours from high school whose father went to jail. Gabe said he was busted under federal law, though he wasn’t sure if it was under RICO or something to do with wires. “Supposedly he took huge massive bets. Huge. He had a rule he was one of the few guys who’d cut people off at 100 grand. He went to jail for four years. Had a nice
house, really nice house in St. Charles\textsuperscript{71}. He was making tons. Tons. I don’t know what the story was but he was making tons. He wasn’t just a bookie. He was like the bookie that bookies go to.” Gabe said. I asked if they paid out to him then.

“Huge. Roy\textsuperscript{72} was telling me all this. This was in a week—those IHOP\textsuperscript{73} guys were in for $100,000. He must have been taking big minimum bets. There’s no way someone was calling to place a fifty-dollar bet. But he got out years ago. Now he heads a restaurant in St. Charles.”

I shook my head and remarked how funny it was that being Italian plays such a big role in where you’re allowed to go and who you knew. Gabe wouldn’t have gone into those places if his uncle or father hadn’t initially introduced him. It was a socialization process passed from father to son. This was common in the dens; often the men would bring their sons by for an hour or two to watch the game. When I began my ethnographic observations at The Cabin in December of 2008, Matthew’s only involvement was to set up the tables and games for the night. After June of 2009, when he finished with school, he began to take on a larger role. He was working at least four times a week, and was acting as a waiter, bringing the gamblers drinks and food, and running to the store to buy them cigarettes. By summer’s end, Matthew was in charge of debt collection: he would go around the neighborhood to collect or deliver money to various players. His role as debt collector happened not out of choice, but situation, as his father fled to the Philippines after he had been released from jail on bond. Still, he said his father was proud of him for being reliable. There was a sense of pride bringing them in to introduce them to this world, and to show them off to the other men. Never did I see one of the bettors bring his daughter in, though.

\textsuperscript{71} A suburb approximately 35 miles west of Chicago.
\textsuperscript{72} Roy was a friend of Gabe’s who owned a bodega in the neighborhood.
\textsuperscript{73} The IHOP guys were a few of the men who owned a franchise of the International House of Pancakes.
“Yea, I mean my dad used to take us when we were young. I remember there’d be one other kid in there during the daytime.” I asked which place.

“At the central place. My dad would always have to go meet somebody for some bullshit—plumbing, tile, anything. We would always be waiting around. If he was coming by, that’s where he would be. That’s where I watched all the Bulls championships—the first three of them. Then the soccer games.”

A commercial about Mardi Gras in New Orleans came on the television. “Man, if we’re not the most corrupt state, then they are.”

“I don’t know…Blagojevich is still in office,” I said.

“Yea, but they’re pretty bad—from what I’ve heard. They’re at least number two.”

THE LAST ACT(ION)

Johnny and I sat in the social club drinking espresso. It was a beautiful fall day in Chicago, and I had just told him I was leaving in two weeks for Los Angeles. I asked if I could still come by to see him if and when I made my way back home. ‘I’ll be here. I’m always here. Nowhere else to go,’ he said. True to his word, when I arrived back in Chicago in late March of 2011, Johnny was sitting at the same table in the club. We caught up on stories, and he told me about a few big wins some of the bettors had during the NFL season. I asked about the neighborhood and he told me of the new mid-rise condos going up down the street. I asked if he thought it was all changing, and he replied ‘Not for me.’

For Johnny and the other bookies, it didn’t matter what was happening in the world around them. As long as they had a space to call their own, they could resist the transformations encircling them. The space for place, as Gieryn (2000) so quipped, still matters. For the men in the gambling dens, the space is all many of them have left. It is my hope this dissertation has
provided insight into the world of bookmaking, and shown the complexities of the gambling dens within urban communities.
Appendix A

ETHNOGRAPHY, QUOTES, PERSONS, MYSELF

My interest in the gambling dens began long before my interest in graduate school. When I began to think about potential research topics, my mind immediately went to the bookie I knew in my youth. Of course, I had no idea if this was in fact a suitable research topic, or potentially something of interest. Bookies and sports betting seemed to not have a particularly studious tone, and I worried it wouldn’t be taken as serious scholarship. As I read through *Blue Collar Communities* (Kornblum 1974), I realized the potential depth of this research as it related to men’s construction of ties in urban neighborhoods.

As I began to map out how I could construct this ethnography, the issue of anonymity was brought to light. Here were men who engaged in illegal activities and, for the bookies, relied on these illegal exchanges for their livelihood. While I appreciate and respect Duneier’s (1999) belief of the value of using real names, so too could I not expect or demand the men permit me to reveal their identity. My IRB forms thus promised the use of anonymity. In this study, no bettor’s true name is used. For the eleven bookies who were kind enough to grant me access into their world, their real names are not documented on the IRB forms, nor anywhere in this dissertation.

Names of each of the betting dens are fictitious in order to protect not only the bookies but the establishments as well. Because I conducted mapping analysis in Chicago, and thus placed locations spatially, I had to be cautious of revealing too much. For each of the five betting sites, I created a detailed map to show where the betting location was, as well as where residents lived in proximity to it. In order to maintain anonymity, the gambling den locations on the map
were shifted either an entire block or placed within a half mile. Bettor’s residential locations were approximate within 1 city block.

With the exception of two interviews, no conversations were recorded. This was at the request of either the bookie or the bettors. I relied primarily on intensive note taking, and each day’s interactions were written up as soon as I came home. Throughout the dissertation, the use of single quotes (‘ ’) is used to represent this methodology of paraphrasing. While the quotes are reliable, I am aware of potential pitfalls. They are reconstructions of conversations, and thus subject to error. I hope at least they embody the spirit and represent the meaning of the dialogue.

Even though all persons represented in this dissertation received a level of anonymity, I have strived to portray each person accurately and to the best of my ability. While some men may come off as unflattering in certain situations, I believe there are relevant sociological points from which to draw. Thus, it is not up to me as an ethnographer to decide how one should be portrayed, but rather to present with as much accuracy and scientific expression as I can.

Throughout my ethnographic research I have, to the best of my ability, remained impartial and unbiased. I have tried to remove myself from the equation as much as possible. As a woman in a hypermasculine space, this was at times a challenge. I recognize my sex may have hindered my ability to build relationships with bettors and bookies, or potentially influenced dialogue between them. Wherever possible, I point out these potential trappings. That said I believe my position as a woman had enormous benefits throughout the ethnography. I was of no threat to the men, and their willingness to open up to me was largely because of this. They did not see me as competition, nor did I need to prove ‘my masculine self’ to be allowed into their space. I was an outsider, and I remained so throughout the research; I make no apologies for it. If nothing else, I hope this encourages other sociologists to move outside their safe haven-whether
that be class, race, or sex-based. I do not believe one can only study his own group, and this opinion is even stronger today than when I began the research. Certainly, there are things I may not have gleaned from conversations, or may not be attuned to, because of my sex, but so too are there nuances I picked up on because of my sex. As a woman and an outsider, I have spent the better part of my years recognizing emotional cues in others: face twists, handclasps, and fidgets. All imply there is more than meets the eye, and in the dens, the ability to pick up on such details was useful. One such example is with Freddie. When Freddie was stifling emotions, he would often push his right fist into his left open palm and say, ‘man.’ To the bettors, this was just Freddie uttering something. I came to realize this equated to him pushing down emotions. It was a tactic he used to keep a strong front. When his sister passed away, he spent the better part of two weeks randomly hitting his fist against his palm; it was his way of maintaining control in the company of the men.

While I spent countless hours and months at each of the dens, and was able to know some of the men quite well, I do not for one moment pretend I am, or was ever, an insider. I was merely fortunate enough for the men to share their thoughts, time, and space.

Over the course of five years of ethnographic research, I came to appreciate just how much skill goes in to being a bookie. The sheer volume of bets placed on a single game are enough to make my head explode. The bookie memorizes all of these numbers; to write it down leaves evidence, and thus an incriminating trail. Further, this work left an impression on me as to the true value of space to call one’s own. Though all of the men who bet enjoyed, even revered, sports, the pull of the den was much more than sports. Indeed, if all the bookie and den had to offer was a way to ‘get down’, the bookie would have become extinct by now, as technological advances have created far simpler, faster, and secure ways to place bets. The gambling den was
the bettors’ space, controlled by the bookie, and a way to create a social group. Cohesion at the
den was impressive; the stability of the den and its patrons was remarkable given how many
urban neighborhood transformations were underway. The marking of manhood, while at times
injurious, was a beautiful thing to watch. Here were men, whose displacement in larger society
left them feeling useless and without a firm ground to stand on, laughing, joking,
commemorating, arguing, and sharing a piece of themselves. To that, I raise a glass and join their
celebration.
### Chart 1

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Chart 7: Occupation Type of Males
Graph 1

Jefferson Park vs. City of Chicago

Jefferson Park Median Household Income

- $0-$19,999 (17%)
- $20,000-$39,999 (25%)
- $40,000-$59,999 (19%)
- $60,000-$99,999 (26%)
- $100,000 or more (13%)
Graph 2

Lincoln Square vs. Chicago

Lincoln Square Median Household Income

- $0-$19,999: 24.3%
- $20,000-$39,999: 17.9%
- $40,000-$59,999: 23.9%
- $60,000-$69,999: 13.8%
- $70,000-$79,999: 20.1%
- $80,000-$89,999: 13.8%
- $90,000-$99,999: 17.9%
- $100,000 or more: 20.1%
Lincoln Square:
Standard Industry Code

- Agriculture
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Service
- Public Administration
- Other

Year Moved In to Unit

- 1969 or earlier
- 1970 to 1979
- 1980 to 1989
- 1990 to 1994
- 1995 to 1998
- 1999 to March 2000

- Renter Occupied
- Owner Occupied
Graph 3

Montclare vs. Chicago

Montclare Household Income

- $0-$19,999: 24.6%
- $20,000-$39,999: 16.3%
- $40,000-$59,999: 16.7%
- $60,000-$99,999: 20.7%
- $100,000+ More: 21.7%
Montclare: Standard Industry Code

- Agriculture
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Service
- Public Administration

Year Moved In To Unit

- 1969 or earlier
- 1970 to 1979
- 1980 to 1989
- 1990 to 1994
- 1995 to 1998
- 1999 to March 2000

- Renter Occupied
- Owner Occupied
Graph 4

New City vs City of Chicago

- New City
- City of Chicago

New City Median Household Income

- $0-$19,999: 31.5%
- $20,000-$39,999: 26.2%
- $40,000-$59,999: 17.6%
- $60,000-$99,999: 17.2%
- $100,000 or more: 7.5%
New City:
Standard Industry Code

- Agriculture
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Service
- Public Administration
- Other

Year Moved In To Unit

- Renter Occupied
- Owner Occupied
Graph 5

West Town vs. Chicago

West Town Median Household Income

- $0-$19,999: 21.1%
- $20,000-$39,999: 15.5%
- $40,000-$49,999: 16.4%
- $50,000-$59,999: 29.5%
- $60,000-$69,999: 17.6%
- $70,000-$79,999
- $80,000-$89,999
- $90,000-$99,999
- $100,000 or more
West Town: Standard Industry Code

- Agriculture
- Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Service
- Public Administration
- Other

Year Moved In To Unit

- 1969 or earlier
- 1970 to 1979
- 1980 to 1989
- 1990 to 1994
- 1995 to 1998
- 1999 to March 2000

- Renter Occupied
- Owner Occupied
Pete: 42, Chinatown. Divorced, 4 kids. Has girlfriend who works below. Doesn’t see kids.

Young: Mid-40s. Works with Stan at market. Sells dvds on side. Bets on horses, MMA, baseball.

Stan: Early 40s. Works at market in Chinatown. Bets on horses, almost anything. Plays keno.

Wife’s cousin is Pete’s cousin.

Legend:
- Maroon = Work
- Green = Friend
- Blue = Blood Relative
- Light Blue = Non-Blood Relative
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Yellow = Know through another
- Purple = Know some other way

Legend:
- Red = Unemployed
- Yellow = Business Owner
- Blue = Blue Collar Occupation
- Grey = White Collar Occupation
- Light Blue = Retired
- Green = Sales/Service Work
Amado: Echo Park. Late 30s. Married, and girlfriend, three kids.

Tim: Late 30s. Used to work at car dealership with Amado when teens. Salesman at dealership. Bets heavy, usually in $500 marks. Lives in Lincoln Heights near Joseph.

Joseph: Mid-30s. Works in factory. Good bettor, knows stats for almost all sports. Knows Amado, grew up with him.


Legend:
- Red = Unemployed
- Yellow = Business Owner
- Blue = Blue Collar Occupation
- Grey = White Collar Occupation
- Light Blue = Retired
- Green = Sales/Service Work
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Purple = Know some other way
- Green = Know through another
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Light Blue = Know through another
- Blue = Friend
- Maroon = Work
- Green = Work
- Blue = Blood Relative
- Light Blue = Non-Blood Relative
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Yellow = Know through another
- Purple = Know some other way

Legend:
- Red = Unemployed
- Yellow = Business Owner
- Blue = Blue Collar Occupation
- Grey = White Collar Occupation
- Light Blue = Retired
- Green = Sales/Service Work
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Purple = Know some other way

Lines:
- Blue = Blood Relative
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Yellow = Know through another
- Purple = Know some other way
Sal: Park Slope, Mid-50s. Divorced, 2 kids. Lives around the corner. Frequently helps at coffee shop down the street that Aunt owns.

Tony: Late 50s. Sal’s cousin by marriage. Sits at club all day. Always bets for Italy win even if odds are terrible.

Martin: Mid-30s. Works in Manhattan in real estate. Good friends with Pete. Lives in neighboring Park Slope—gets flack for it frequently. Bets hockey and occasionally other sports if big game.

Donny: Mid-30s. Pete’s roommate. Works for city as elevator operator. Bets football only, usually $50 a game.

Kyle: Late 20s. Brother of Donny. Works with him as elevator apprentice. Lives in Staten Island. Married with disabled child; slowed betting when he found out.

Mike: Tony’s stepson. Early 20s. Lives in Queens and at Tony’s but often comes by on the weekends. Goes to college.


Pete: Early 30s. Irish. Lenny’s bartender. Tries to get in on action (verbal and monetary)—often fails. Sal doesn’t trust him; keeps him on short leash. Lives around the corner from club and bar.

Lenny: Early 40s. Owns bar down the street. Grew up in New Jersey, lives in neighborhood. Respected by most of the guys. Bets occasionally on big games.

Legend:
- Red = Unemployed
- Yellow = Business Owner
- Blue = Blue Collar Occupation
- Grey = White Collar Occupation
- Light Blue = Retired
- Green = Sales/Service Work
- Maroon = Work
- Green = Friend
- Blue = Blood Relative
- Light Blue = Non-Blood Relative
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Yellow = Know through another
- Purple = Know some other way

Lines:
- Maroon = Work
- Green = Friends
- Blue = Blood Relative
- Light Blue = Non-Blood Relative
- Orange = Neighborhood
- Yellow = Know through another
- Purple = Know some other way
Frank: Bookie in West Town. 3rd generation Italian. Grew up on Huron and Washtenaw.

Leon: Fitness Trainer. Deals steroids on side. Bets on every sport, no cap.

Josh: Financial advisor. Son of Frank’s friend. Doesn’t bet frequently and Frank runs him for it.

Bobby: Used to run numbers 50 years back. Bets now on big games. Runs a poker game in the back of his barber shop every Thursday night.

Michael: Retired roofer. Cap of $2,000. Bets on NFL and NBA. Won’t come around when Sean, Tony, or Marcus are there.


Peeps: CTA Bus Driver. Bets on Boxing-money line. Passes out CTA passes to some of the guys once a month; sells others.

Brian: Brother of Sean. Pharmacist. Capped at $2,000. Often hands out prescription drugs to the guys.

Giovanni: Frank’s nephew. Rehabs houses around city. Sought after for advice on games. Bets between $100-500 on NFL and MBA.


Donald: Anesthesiologist at Northwestern Hospital. Lives in Kenilworth. Has to prove masculinity to guys frequently. Smallest bet $2,000. NFL, NCAA, MLB. When wins, others usually pissed.

Sean: Works at Board of Trade. Frank gives him different line. Tried to cut bets when Market went down, but couldn’t do it.

Tony: BOT. Gets different line from Frank. Dropped $10,000 three times; lost 2-3 bets.

Marcus: Sells coke. Runner at BOT. Got yanked for a while for selling coke out of bar.

Topher: Giovanni’s assistant. Lives in Tri-Taylor. Capped at $1,000. Bets once a week on over/under, $100 each bet.

Carmine: Lives in Little Italy. Tailor. Plays in Bobby’s poker game. Bets on Soccer, Boxing. Capped at $1,000.


Marshall: Teacher at CPS. Capped at $500. Bets across all sports: under/over.


Al: Judge in western suburb. Drops $2,000-5,000 a game, constantly firing.

Big Paul: Tom’s brother. Retired bricklayer. No cap. At bar almost every day. Initiated his son into betting, saw it as rite.

Nate: Cubs fan. Puts too much stock in home field. Gets razzed whenever he places a line on them. Capped at $1,000.

Paul: Big Paul’s son. Lays concrete part-time. Does work for friends of Frank to pay down debt.

Emmitt: Does boat tours of Chicago. Gloater when he wins, disrespected for it. Bets $50 avg. on MLB.

Francis: Retired bar owner. Frank used to sweep his floors. Bets only once or twice a month but spends every day at bar. No cap.

Blue=Blood Relative
Green=Friend
Yellow=Non-Blood Relative
Orange=Neighborhood
Purple=Know some other way
Red=Unemployed
Yellow=Business Owner
Blue=Blue Collar Occupation
Grey=White Collar Occupation
Light Blue=Retired
Green=Sales/Service Work

Gambling Study Needs Participants

Participants are needed for a gambling study. To be eligible, you must:

1. Gamble with a bookie or through an internet website.
2. Live in the city of Chicago.
3. Be at least 18 years of age.

If you are eligible, you may receive compensation for your time. The participation will involve an interview lasting from 15 minutes to 45 minutes. Reply by email and provide a suitable contact email or phone number where you can be reached.
Gambling Arrests & Median Household Income, 2010

Map 1: Gambling Arrests & Median Household Income, 2010

Legend

- Bookie Location
- Chicago Community Areas
- Gambling Arrests in Areas <$40,000; N=9,443
- 2007-2010 Gambling Arrests; N=986

Legend:

- No Data
- $1 - 20,000
- $20,001 - 40,000
- $40,001 - 65,000
- $65,001 - 95,000
- $95,001 - 155,000
- $155,001+

Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Map 2: Bookie & Bettor Locations, Median Household Income, 2010

Legend

🌟 Bookie Location
📍 1 Mile Radius
☑ Chicago Community Area
☑ Median Household Income
☒ No Data

('$1 - 20,000
'$20,001 - 40,000
'$40,001 - 65,000
'$65,001 - 95,000
'$95,001 - 155,000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; www.census.gov
Map 3: 2007-2010 Gambling Arrests

Legend
- Police Districts
- Gambling Arrests, 2007-2010
  - Indoors; N=1,063
  - Outdoors; N=9,206
  - Other; N=160

Source: Chicago Police Department, 2010.
Gambling Arrests & Race Demographics, 2010

Legend
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Hispanic 90% or more
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more
- Two or More Race Majority
- Black 50-69%
- Black 70-89%
- Black 90% or more
- Two or More Race Majority
- Bookie Locations
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more

Map 6:
Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Bookie & Bettors, Race Demographics, 2010

Legend
- Lincoln Square Bettors
- Montclare Bettors
- Jefferson Park Bettors
- New City Bettors
- West Town Bettors
- Bookie Locations
- 1 Mile Buffer
- Chicago Community Areas
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Hispanic 90% or more
- Two or More Race Majority
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more

Map 7: Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010
Map 8: 2007-2010 Gambling Arrests & Empowerment Zones

Legend

Race
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- Black 50-69%
- Black 70-89%
- Black 90% or more
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Hispanic 90% or more
- No Data

Gambling Arrests, 2007-2010
- Indoors
- Outdoors
- Other
- Bookie Locations
- Empowerment Zones
- Chicago Community Areas

Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Gambling Arrests & Race Demographics, 2010

Legend

Gambling Arrests, 2007-2010
- Indoors; N=1,063
- Outdoors; N=9,206
- Other; N=160
- Chicago Community Areas
- Bookie Locations

Race
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- Two or More Race Majority
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more

Map 9:
Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Gambling Arrests & Race Demographics, 2010

Legend

- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more
- Two or More Race Majority
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Hispanic 90% or more
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- Chicago Community Areas
- No Data

Map 10:
Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Gambling Arrests & Race Demographics, 2010

Community Areas:
1 Rogers Park
2 West Ridge
3 Uptown
4 Lincoln Square
5 North Center
6 Lake View
7 Lincoln Park
8 Near North Side
9 Edison Park
10 Norwood Park
11 Jefferson Park
12 Forest Glen
13 North Park
14 Albany Park
15 Portage Park
16 Irving Park
17 Dunning
18 Montclare
19 Belmont Cragin
20 Hermosa
21 Avondale
22 Logan Square
23 Humboldt Park
24 West Town
25 Austin
26 West Garfield Park
27 East Garfield Park
28 Near West Side
29 North Lawndale
30 South Lawndale
31 Lower West Side
32 Loop
33 Near South Side
34 Armour Square
35 Douglas
36 Oakland
37 Fuller Park
38 Grand Boulevard
39 Kenwood
40 Washington Park
41 Hyde Park
42 Woodlawn
43 South Shore
44 Chatham
45 Avalon Park
46 South Chicago
47 Burnside
48 Calumet Heights
49 Roseland
50 Pullman
51 South Deering
52 East Side
53 West Pullman
54 Riverdale
55 Hegewisch
56 Garfield Ridge
57 Archer Heights
58 Brighton Park
59 McKinley Park
60 Bridgeport
61 New City
62 West Elsdon
63 Gage Park
64 Clearing
65 West Lawn
66 Chicago Lawn
67 West Englewood
68 Englewood
69 Greater Grand Crossing
70 Ashburn
71 Auburn Gresham
72 Beverly
73 Washington Heights
74 Mount Greenwood
75 Morgan Park
76 O’Hare
77 Edgewater

Legend:
- 2007-2010 Gambling Arrests: N=10,388
- Arrests in White Majority Communities: N=41
- Chicago Community Areas

Race:
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Hispanic 90% or more
- Two or More Race Majority
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more

Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Male Educational Attainment, 2010

Legend
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Professional
- PhD
- Bookie Location
- Chicago Community Areas
- Male Educational Attainment
  - 1 Dot = 400
  - No School to 12th
  - High School Diploma to Some College
  - Associate's Degree

Map 12:
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Male Educational Attainment & Race Demographics, 2010

Legend

- Dot = 400
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Hispanic 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- White 50-69%
- African American 90% or more
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more

Map 13:
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Male Occupations, 2010

Legend
- Chicago Community Areas
- Male Occupations
  - 1 Dot = 350
  - Management
  - Service
  - Construction
  - Production
  - Sales & Office
- Bookie Location
- 1 Mile Buffer

Map 14:
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010
Male Occupations & Race Demographics, 2010

Legend
- Chicago Community Areas
- Race
  - No Data
  - Asian 50-69%
  - Asian 70-89%
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Male Occupations
  - 1 Dot = 378.814976
  - Management
  - Sales & Office
  - Service
  - Construction
  - Production

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Gambling Arrests & Housing Occupancy, 2010

Legend

- Bookie Locations
- 2007-2010 Arrests; N=10,429
- No Data
- Chicago Community Areas

Housing Occupancy

- 65.1-75%
- 75.1-85%
- 85.1-95%
- 95.1-100%

Community Areas:
1 Rogers Park
2 West Ridge
3 Uptown
4 Lincoln Square
5 North Center
6 Lake View
7 Lincoln Park
8 Near North Side
9 Edison Park
10 Norwood Park
11 Jefferson Park
12 Forest Glen
13 North Park
14 Albany Park
15 Portage Park
16 Irving Park
17 Dunning
18 Montclare
19 Belmont Cragin
20 Hermosa
21 Avondale
22 Logan Square
23 Humboldt Park
24 West Town
25 Austin
26 West Garfield Park
27 East Garfield Park
28 Near West Side
29 North Lawndale
30 South Lawndale
31 Lower West Side
32 Loop
33 Near South Side
34 Armour Square
35 Douglas
36 Oakland
37 Fuller Park
38 Grand Boulevard
39 Kenwood
40 Washington Park
41 Hyde Park
42 Woodlawn
43 South Shore
44 Chatham
45 Avalon Park
46 South Chicago
47 Burnside
48 Calumet Heights
49 Roseland
50 Pullman
51 South Deering
52 East Side
53 West Pullman
54 Riverdale
55 Hegewisch
56 Garfield Ridge
57 Archer Heights
58 Brighton Park
59 McKinley Park
60 Bridgeport
61 New City
62 West Elsdon
63 Gage Park
64 Clearing
65 West Lawn
66 Chicago Lawn
67 West Englewood
68 Englewood
69 Greater Grand Crossing
70 Ashburn
71 Auburn Gresham
72 Beverly
73 Washington Heights
74 Mount Greenwood
75 Morgan Park
76 O'Hare
77 Edgewater

Maps 16-25

Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Housing Occupancy & Race Demographics, 2010

Community Areas:
1 Rogers Park
2 West Ridge
3 Uptown
4 Lincoln Square
5 North Center
6 Lake View
7 Lincoln Park
8 Near North Side
9 Edison Park
10 Norwood Park
11 Jefferson Park
12 Forest Glen
13 North Park
14 Albany Park
15 Portage Park
16 Irving Park
17 Dunning
18 Montclare
19 Belmont Cragin
20 Hermosa
21 Avondale
22 Logan Square
23 Humboldt Park
24 West Town
25 Austin
26 West Garfield Park
27 East Garfield Park
28 Near West Side
29 North Lawndale
30 South Lawndale
31 Lower West Side
32 Loop
33 Near South Side
34 Armour Square
35 Douglas
36 Oakland
37 Fuller Park
38 Grand Boulevard
39 Kenwood
40 Washington Park
41 Hyde Park
42 Woodlawn
43 South Shore
44 Chatham
45 Avalon Park
46 South Chicago
47 Burnside
48 Calumet Heights
49 Roseland
50 Pullman
51 South Deering
52 East Side
53 West Pullman
54 Riverdale
55 Hegewisch
56 Garfield Ridge
57 Archer Heights
58 Brighton Park
59 McKinley Park
60 Bridgeport
61 New City
62 West Elsdon
63 Gage Park
64 Clearing
65 West Lawn
66 Chicago Lawn
67 North Lawndale
68 Englewood
69 Greater Grand Crossing
70 Ashburn
71 Auburn Gresham
72 Beverly
73 Washington Heights
74 Mount Greenwood
75 Morgan Park
76 O’Hare
77 Edgewater

Legend
Percent of Housing Occupied
- ≤35%
- 35.1-75%
- 75.1-85%
- 85.1-95%
- ≥95%

Race
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Two or More Race Majority
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more
- Hispanic 90% or more
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more

Map 17:
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Gambling Arrests & Bookie Locations;
Race Demographics, 2010

Community Areas:
1 Rogers Park
2 West Ridge
3 Uptown
4 Lincoln Square
5 North Center
6 Lake View
7 Lincoln Park
8 Near North Side
9 Edison Park
10 Norwood Park
11 Jefferson Park
12 Forest Glen
13 North Park
14 Albany Park
15 Portage Park
16 Irving Park
17 Dunning
18 Montclare
19 Belmont Cragin
20 Hermosa
21 Avondale
22 Logan Square
23 Humboldt Park
24 West Town
25 Austin
26 West Garfield Park
27 East Garfield Park
28 Near West Side
29 North Lawndale
30 South Lawndale
31 Lower West Side
32 Loop
33 Near South Side
34 Armour Square
35 Douglas
36 Oakland
37 Fuller Park
38 Grand Boulevard
39 Kenwood
40 Washington Park
41 Hyde Park
42 Woodlawn
43 South Shore
44 Chatham
45 Avalon Park
46 South Chicago
47 Burnside
48 Calumet Heights
49 Roseland
50 Pullman
51 South Deering
52 East Side
53 West Pullman
54 Riverdale
55 Hegewisch
56 Garfield Ridge
57 Archer Heights
58 Brighton Park
59 McKinley Park
60 Bridgeport
61 New City
62 West Elsdon
63 Gage Park
64 Clearing
65 West Lawn
66 Chicago Lawn
67 West Englewood
68 Englewood
69 Greater Grand Crossing
70 Ashburn
71 Auburn Gresham
72 Beverly
73 Washington Heights
74 Mount Greenwood
75 Morgan Park
76 O'Hare
77 Edgewater

Legend:
- Chicago Community Areas
- Bookie Locations
- Gambling Arrests; N=10,144
- Arrests within Buffer; N=285
- 1 Mile Radius

Race:
- No Data
- Asian 50-69%
- Asian 70-89%
- African American 50-69%
- African American 70-89%
- African American 90% or more
- Hispanic 50-69%
- Hispanic 70-89%
- Hispanic 90% or more
- Two or More Race Majority
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- White 90% or more

Source: Chicago Police Department; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

Map 18: Lake Michigan
Racial Demographics of Bettors, 2010

Community Areas:
1. Rogers Park
2. West Ridge
3. Uptown
4. Lincoln Square
5. North Center
6. Lake View
7. Lincoln Park
8. Near North Side
9. Edison Park
10. Norwood Park
11. Jefferson Park
12. Forest Glen
13. North Park
14. Albany Park
15. Portage Park
16. Irving Park
17. Dunning
18. Montclare
19. Belmont Cragin
20. Hermosa
21. Avondale
22. Logan Square
23. Humboldt Park
24. West Town
25. Austin
26. West Garfield Park
27. East Garfield Park
28. Near West Side
29. North Lawndale
30. South Lawndale
31. Lower West Side
32. Loop
33. Near South Side
34. Armour Square
35. Douglas
36. Oakland
37. Fuller Park
38. Grand Boulevard
39. Kenwood
40. Washington Park
41. Hyde Park
42. Woodlawn
43. South Shore
44. Chatham
45. Avalon Park
46. South Chicago
47. Burnside
48. Calumet Heights
49. Roseland
50. Pullman
51. South Deering
52. East Side
53. West Pullman
54. Riverdale
55. Hegewisch
56. Garfield Ridge
57. Archer Heights
58. Brighton Park
59. McKinley Park
60. Bridgeport
61. New City
62. West Elsdon
63. Gage Park
64. Clearing
65. West Lawn
66. Chicago Lawn
67. West Englewood
68. Englewood
69. Greater Grand Crossing
70. Ashburn
71. Auburn Gresham
72. Beverly
73. Washington Heights
74. Mount Greenwood
75. Morgan Park
76. O'Hare
77. Edgewater

Map 19:
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.
Race Demographics & Foreign-Born Population, 2010

Bookie & Bettor Locations, Industrial Corridors, 2010

Map 21:
2007-2010 Gambling Arrests & CTA Lines

Map 22:
Source: City of Chicago, www.cityofchicago.org;
Chicago Police Department, 2010

Legend
- Chicago Community Areas
- CTA Line
- 2007-2010 Gambling Arrests
- CTA Station

Lake Michigan
Legend:
- African American 70-89%
- Hispanic 50-69%
- White 50-69%
- White 70-89%
- Other Ethnicity

References


Kendall, Lori. 2000. “‘Oh No! I’m a Nerd!’: Hegemonic Masculinity on an Online Forum.”


