

# WELCOME

Goldsmiths  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Frank speaking: what  
gambling researchers can  
learn from tobacco control

Rebecca Cassidy, Professor of Anthropology



# Declaration of interests

I do not accept funding from the industry or their intermediaries.

2020 - 2024 received funding from the Leverhulme Trust to conduct research unrelated to this presentation.

2019 - 2020 paid specialist advisor to the House of Lords Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry. Support for travel and accommodation in Canada from the Alberta Gambling Research Institute and an honorarium, travel and accommodation from the World Health Organisation and Turkish Green Crescent Society to attend a meeting in Istanbul.

2017 travel, accommodation and subsistence costs to attend the International Think Tank on Gambling Research, Policy and Practice (ITTGRPP) in Banff, Canada, partly funded by the Alberta Gambling Research Institute (AGRI) and partly by participant registration fees. Travel, accommodation and subsistence to attend the Auckland meeting of the ITTGRPP partly financially supported by the New Zealand Ministry of Health and by participant registration fees. Accommodation, travel and subsistence to speak at a conference on gambling in Helsinki from the University of Helsinki Centre for Research on Addiction, Control and Governance. The centre is supported by an annual grant from The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

2010 - 2015 European Research Council for ERC-2010-StG, SH2

2006-2009 Economic and Social Research Council UK and Responsibility in Gambling Trust (now GambleAware).

## Setting the Scene:



"I believe that a growing gambling sector is compatible with creating an even safer one. I want a gambling sector in this country that is one we can be proud of - one that offers good jobs, interesting careers, brings social value, and is one that people enjoy while having vital protections in place."

Minister for Gambling Baroness Twycross's speech to the Betting and Gaming Council Annual General Meeting 2025





# Learning from tobacco control to tackle gambling industry harms

The use of tobacco industry tactics by the gambling and other health harming industries means governments must act to prevent large scale avoidable harm, argue **May van Schalkwyk and colleagues**

May C I van Schalkwyk,<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Hawkins,<sup>2,3</sup> Rebecca Cassidy,<sup>4</sup> Jeff Collin,<sup>3,5</sup> Anna B Gilmore,<sup>3,6</sup> Mark Petticrew<sup>1,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Public Health and Policy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK

<sup>2</sup> MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge, Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge, UK

<sup>3</sup> Population Health Improvement UK (PHI-UK)

<sup>4</sup> Department of Anthropology, Goldsmiths University, London, UK

<sup>5</sup> Global Health Policy Unit School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK

<sup>6</sup> Department for Health, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Bath, Bath, UK

Correspondence to: M C I van Schalkwyk  
may.vanschalkwyk@lshtm.ac.uk

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2025;388:e082866  
<http://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2024-082866>

Published: 12 February 2025

When an industry acts to maintain profits and ensure its survival despite its harms, serious and avoidable public health crises unfold.<sup>1-4</sup> Tobacco smoking is the primary example of this: an ongoing industrial epidemic fuelled by tobacco companies' efforts to promote smoking, cast doubt on evidence of harms, and prevent, delay, and weaken policies that threaten its commercial interests.<sup>4</sup> The progress made in reducing smoking reflects not only widespread acceptance of the harms but also a comprehensive understanding of the tobacco industry's efforts to undermine tobacco control.<sup>5</sup> These practices include strategies to influence science, policy making, and public norms and to establish commercial entities as legitimate health policy partners.<sup>6,7</sup>

is despite gambling being known to lead to serious harms such as mental illness, financial distress, family breakdown, child neglect, domestic violence, and suicide.<sup>15,16</sup> Furthermore, children, young people, and those experiencing poverty, discrimination, or other disadvantage may be at greater risk of harm, while industry profits from the harm produced.<sup>15,16</sup> Gambling damages lives, families, and communities; burdens public services; and drives crime, poverty, and inequities the world over.<sup>15,16</sup> This harm will continue as long as we fail to learn from the history of the tobacco industry's efforts to manufacture doubt and delay.

The year 2024 marked 70 years since leading US

# THE TOBACCO LEAF

April 17  
1954

## 36 Distinguished Specialists Assert There Is No Proof That Smoking Can Cause Lung Cancer

The Tobacco Industry Research Committee has made public a list of quotations and statements authorized by 36 distinguished cancer authorities denying that there is any proof establishing a link between smoking and lung cancer. The committee is the spokesman for leading tobacco manufacturers and associations of tobacco growers.

The list, entitled "A Scientific Perspective on the Cigarette Controversy," was published because, as a result of the sensational nature of statements about tobacco, many laymen and even physicians are unaware of the extent to which these statements have been questioned by other authorities.

The booklet begins with an introduction signed by the Tobacco Industry Research Committee, 350 Fifth Avenue.

**Paul Brogan, Jr.**  
**New President.**

The committee is represented by Hill & Knowlton, Inc., public relations counselors, at the Empire State Building address.

"These other authorities find no proof establishing that cigarette smoking is a cause of lung cancer," the introduction says. "Especially significant is the stand taken by the National Cancer Institute of the United States Government. In a report published in April, 1953, the N. C. I. says:

"Aside from the statistical significance and apparent realness of these associations there remains the question of whether smoking is etiologically (etiology is the science of causes of diseases) related to lung cancer. Considerations are presented which lead to the conclusion that the etiological significance of these associations remains unestablished."

Then follow quotations from scientific reports and newspaper articles, questioning the published reports that cancer and smoking may be linked. Authorities cited include British and Canadian re-

Monday, January 4, 1954

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS

Page



ROBERTSON WILLIAM R. JENNER... (Caption text is partially obscured)

### Secrecy Veils Jenner Quiz of Gouzenko

NEWSPAPERS... (Text is partially obscured)

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## A FRANK STATEMENT TO CIGARETTE SMOKERS

RECENT REPORTS on experiments with mice have given wide publicity to a theory that cigarette smoking is in some way linked with lung cancer in human beings.

Although conducted by doctors of professional standing, these experiments are not regarded as conclusive in the field of cancer research. However, we do not believe that any serious medical research, even though its results are inconclusive should be disregarded or lightly dismissed.

At the same time, we feel it is in the public interest to call attention to the fact that eminent doctors and research scientists have publicly questioned the claimed significance of these experiments.

Distinguished authorities point out:

1. That medical research of recent years indicates many possible causes of lung cancer.
2. That there is no agreement among the authorities regarding what the cause is.
3. That there is no proof that cigarette smoking is one of the causes.
4. That statistics purporting to link cigarette smoking with the disease could apply with equal force to any one of many other aspects of modern life. Indeed the validity of the statistics themselves is questioned by numerous scientists.

We accept an interest in people's health as a basic responsibility, paramount to every other consideration in our business.

We believe the products we make are not injurious to health.

We always have and always will cooperate closely with those whose task it is to safeguard the public health.

For more than 300 years tobacco has given relief, relaxation, and enjoyment to mankind. At one time or another during those years critics have held it responsible for practically every disease of the human body. Out by now these charges have been abandoned for lack of evidence.

Regardless of the record of the past, the fact that cigarette smoking today should even be suspected as a cause of a serious disease is a matter of deep concern to us.

Many people have asked us what we are doing to meet the public's concern aroused by the recent reports. Here is the answer:

1. We are gladdening aid and assistance in the research effort into all phases of tobacco use and health. This joint financial aid will of course be in addition to what is already being contributed by individual companies.
2. For this purpose we are establishing a joint industry group consisting largely of the undersigned. This group will be known as TOBACCO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE.
3. In charge of the research activities of the Committee will be a selection of unimpeachable integrity and national repute. In addition there will be an Advisory Board of scientists distinguished in the cigarette industry. A group of distinguished men from medicine, science, and education will be invited to serve on this Board. These scientists will advise the Committee on its research activities.

This statement is being issued because we believe the people are entitled to know where we stand on this matter and what we intend to do about it.

TOBACCO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

4000 EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, NEW YORK 1, N. Y.

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Fig 1 | The tobacco industry's 1954 "Frank Statement" to cigarette smokers<sup>17</sup>



# Gambling industry responds to public concerns

Every day, millions of us place a bet – a freedom that should be enjoyed safely and responsibly.

As leading gambling companies, we have a responsibility to the communities where we operate – offering fun and entertainment for the majority while protecting the vulnerable, especially young people.

Recently concerns about gambling have grown – particularly because of the tone of some of the advertising of betting on TV at times when children may be watching. We are therefore announcing some important changes.

From 1 October:

- We will introduce a voluntary TV advertising ban on sign-up offers (free bets and free money) before 9pm
- We will withdraw all advertising of gaming machines from betting shop windows
- We will commit 20% of shop window advertising to responsible gambling messages

From the start of next year:

- We will fund a major new advertising campaign to educate people on responsible gambling
- All TV advertising will carry more prominent responsible gambling messages
- To increase public confidence, a new body, the Senet Group, chaired by an independent Standards Commissioner, will hold us to account

These undertakings come today from the four of us, but we know that across the industry many others have high standards in their commitment to responsible gambling, and we invite them to join us.

We are listening to what you say and will continue to work constructively with the Government and the Regulator to improve standards of player protection.



James Henderson  
Chief Executive Officer  
William Hill PLC



Richard Glynn  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ladbrokes PLC



Carl Lever  
Group Chief Executive  
Gala Coral



Patrick Kennedy  
Chief Executive Officer  
Paddy Power PLC



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## TOBACCO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

5400 EMPIRE STATE BUILDING, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

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# Gambling industry responds to public concerns

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Patrick Kennedy  
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Paddy Power PLC



www.senetgroup.org.uk







**Merrell Williams Jr  
paralegal who leaked  
thousands of internal  
documents of the  
Brown & Williamson  
Tobacco Company**



# Fair Game:

## Producing gambling research

The Goldsmiths Report

R. Cassidy, C. Loussouarn, A. Pisac

Open access report

Published 2014

Interviews with 109 stakeholders including researchers, industry members and policy users.

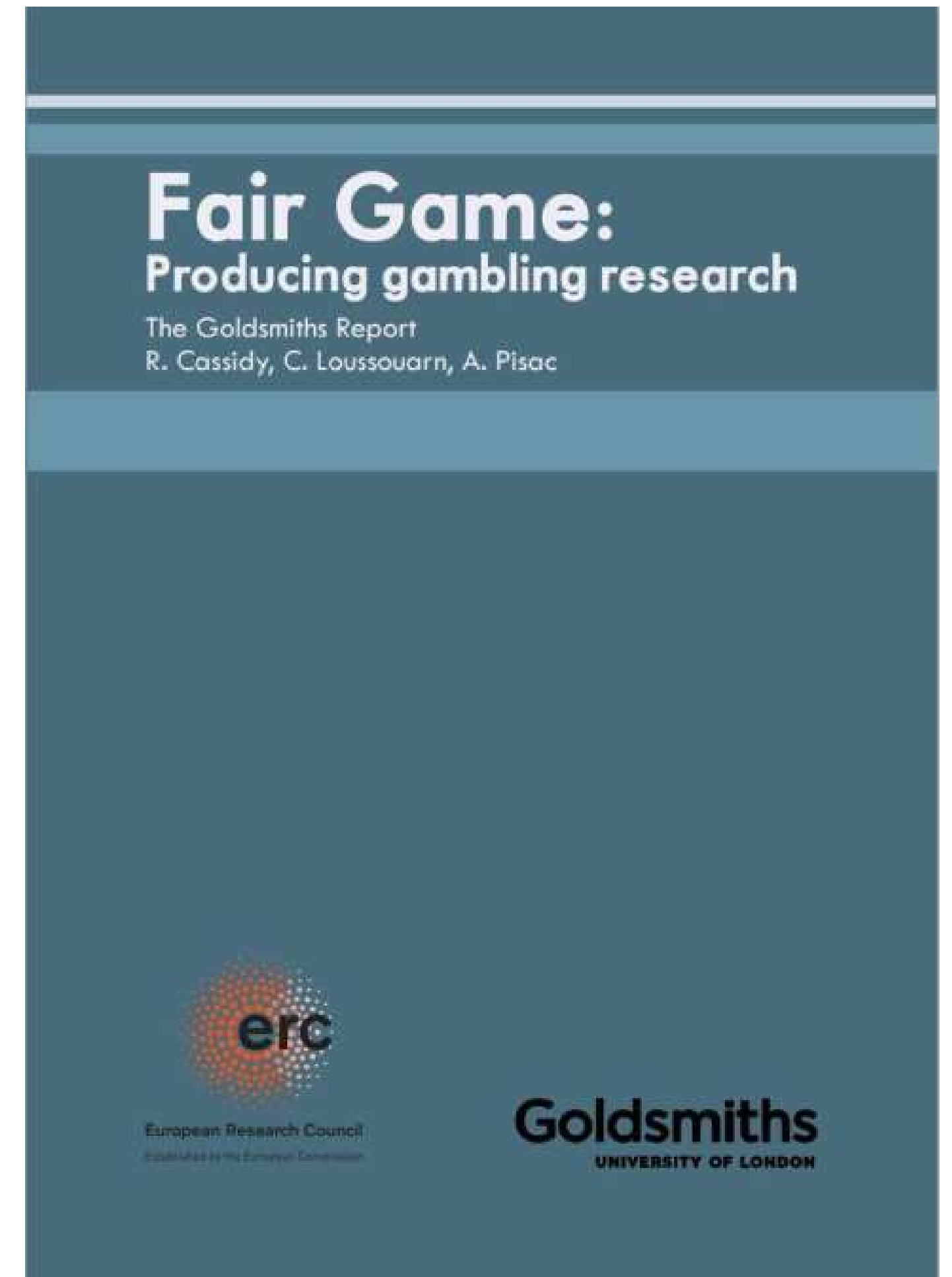


European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

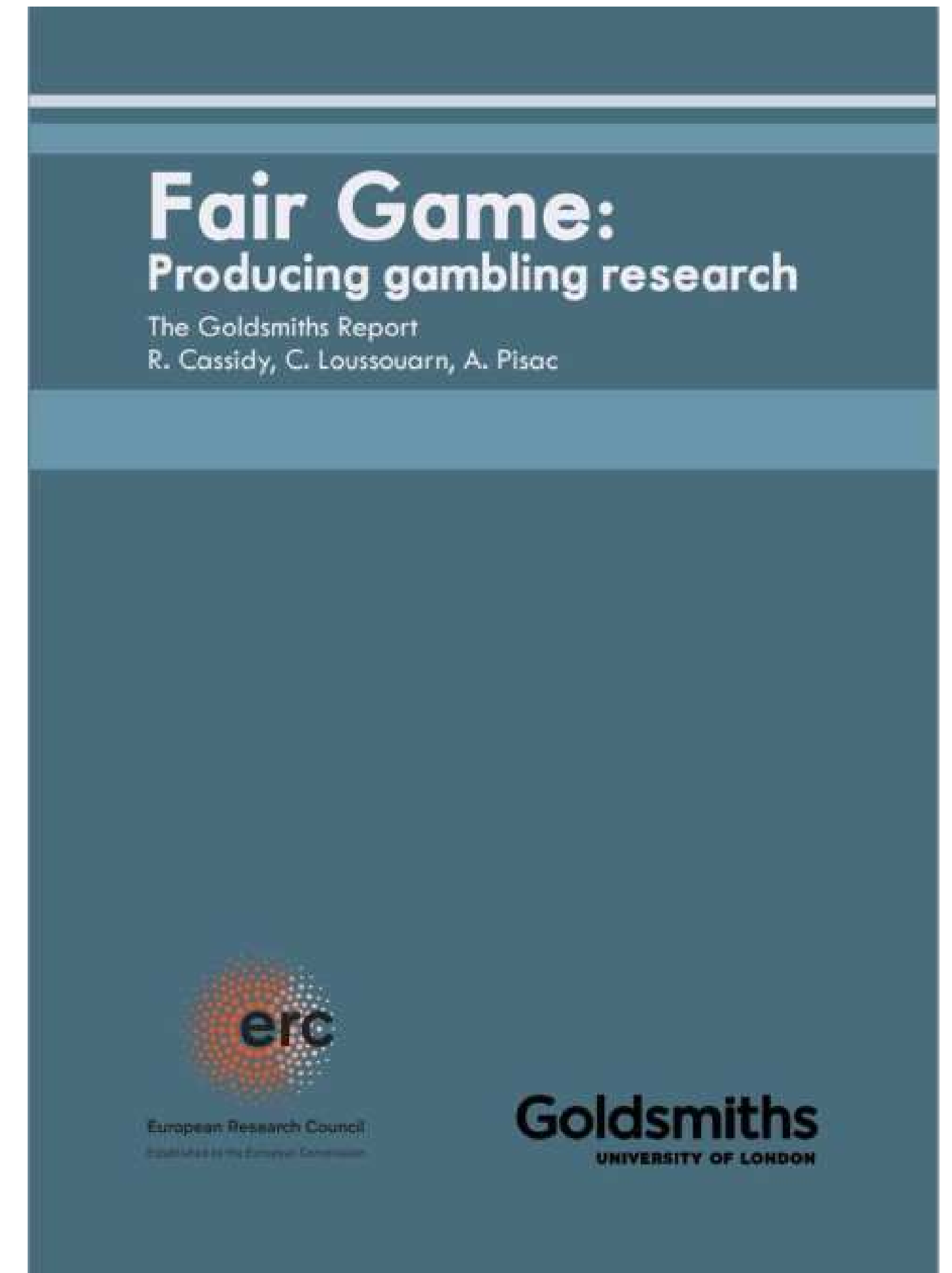
**Goldsmiths**  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



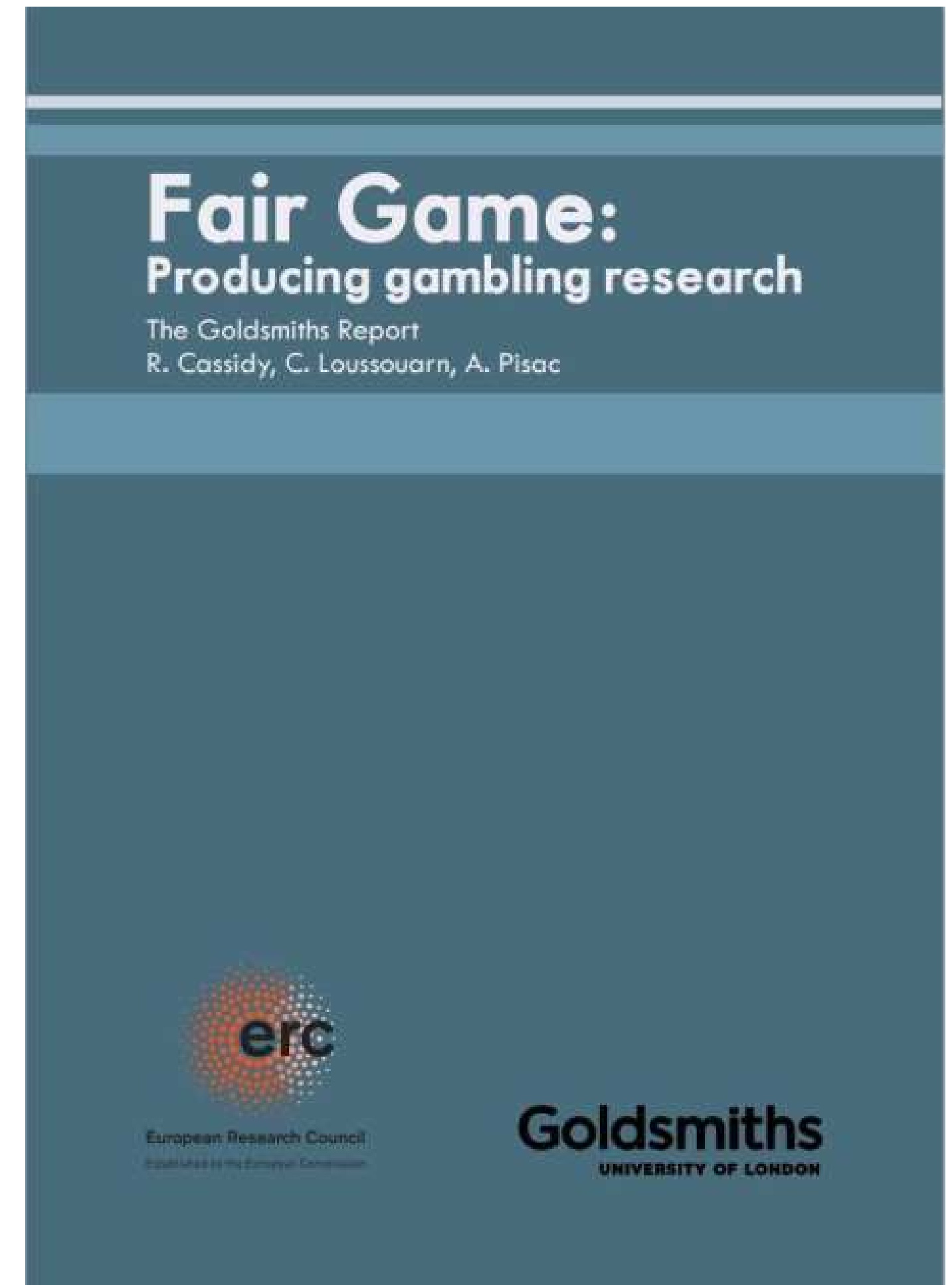
I remember a professional organisation wanted to find out that the rate of problem gambling was less than 1% or something like that. My boss was offered a £10,000 bribe paid straight into his bank account.



I've never known anything like the way that some of these gambling academics are in bed with the industry.

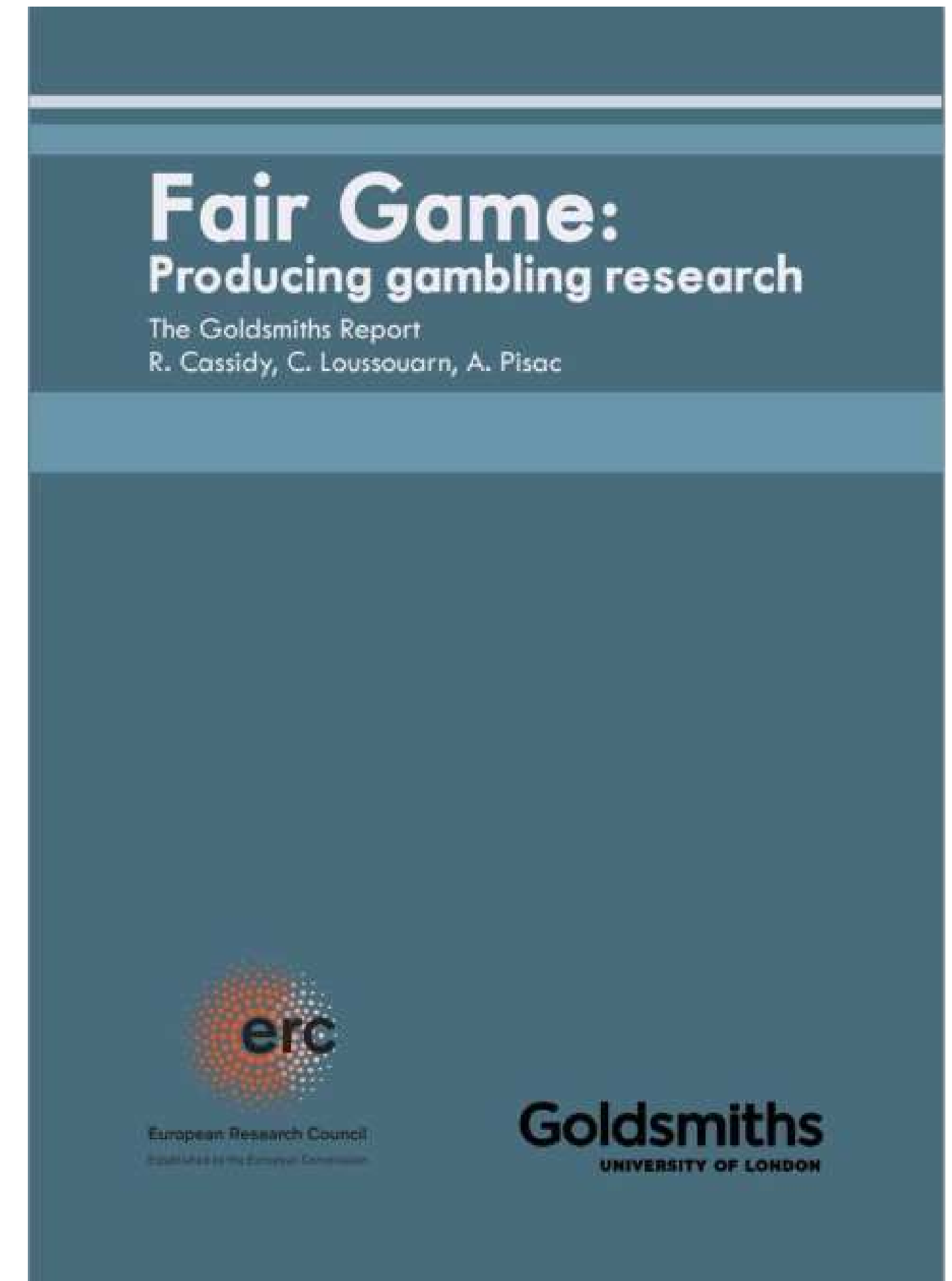


The industry are very good, they can offer a very nice little perk. I was the recipient of quite a lot of corporate hospitality, very nice, thank you very much! They can do that, so they are very good at getting people on their side by legitimate acceptable ways in this country or not. I mean I don't know if they cross the line, they probably do at times, like everybody else does.

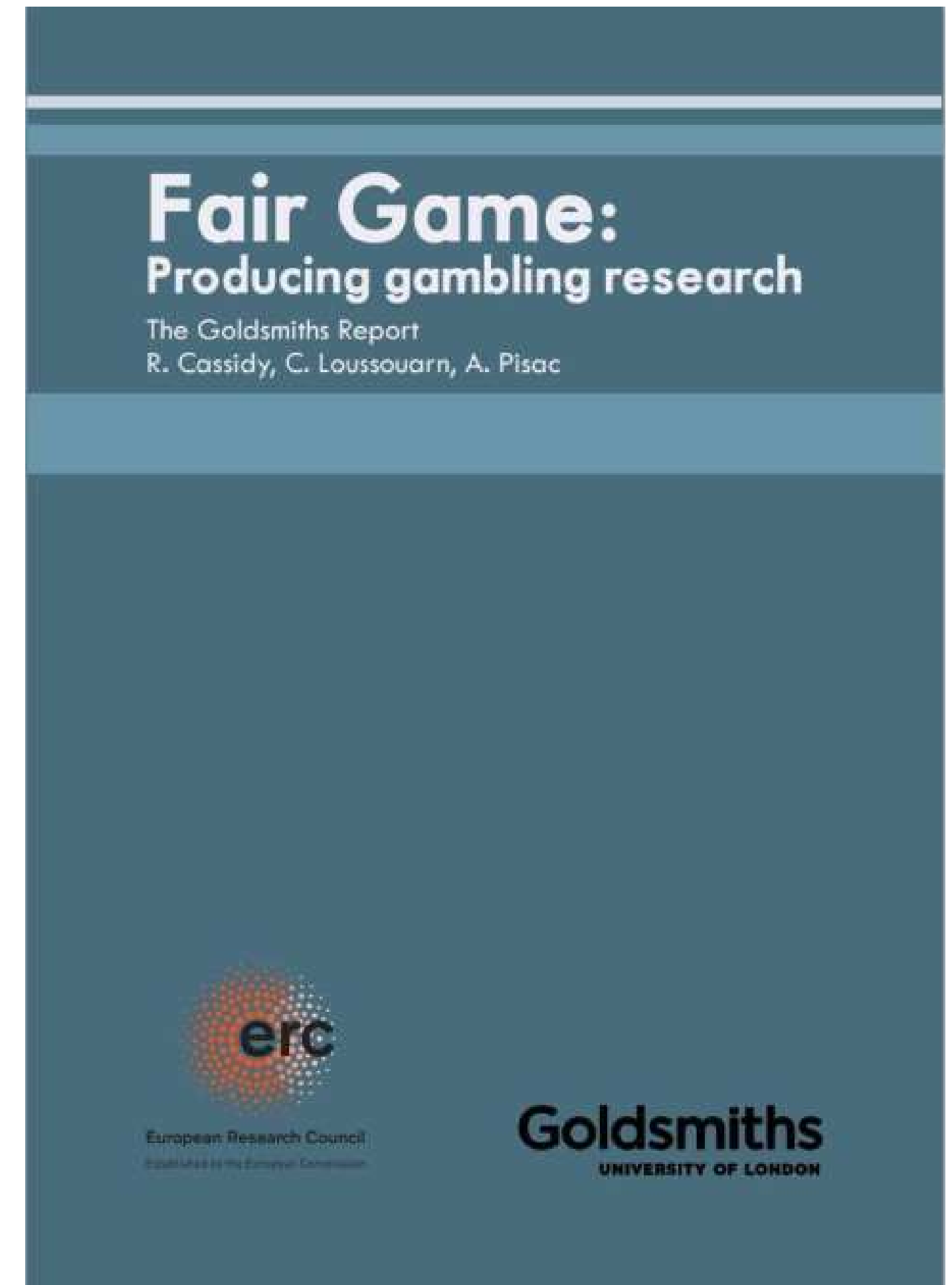




The prevailing paradigm is one that is excusatory, it is one that not just by default but by explicit design sets out to blame the individual [...]  
In the UK you've got a very discouraging political context, in terms of free markets and informed consumers: anything goes as long as people get a bit of information and then what-ever they suffer is their own fault.

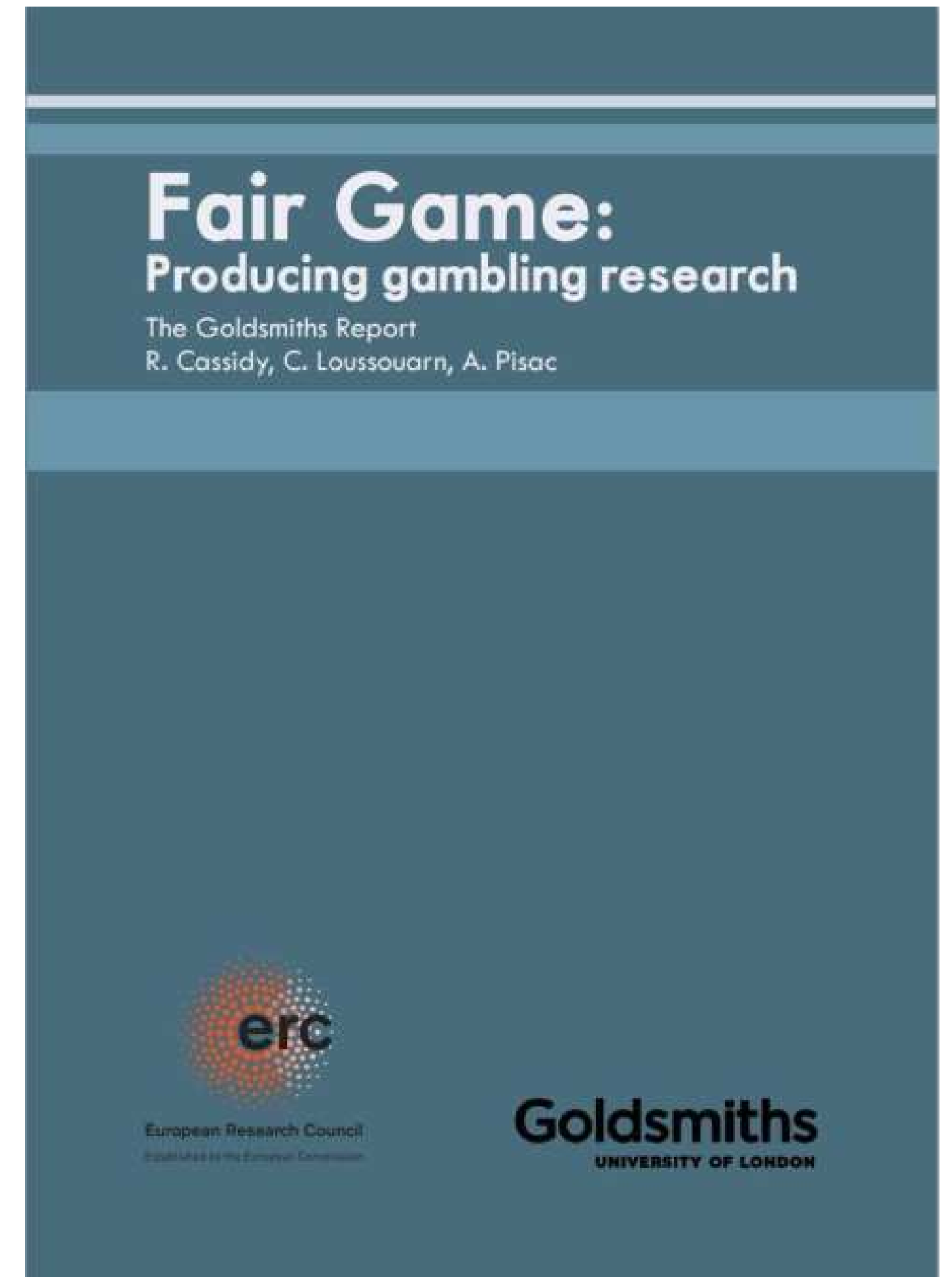


Problem gamblers are problem people. They are drug addicts, criminals, they are unable to control their impulses and this is why it is impossible and pointless trying to prevent them from harming themselves. These are damaged people.



We say we don't want problem gamblers, but what's the difference between a problem gambler and a really good, loyal customer?

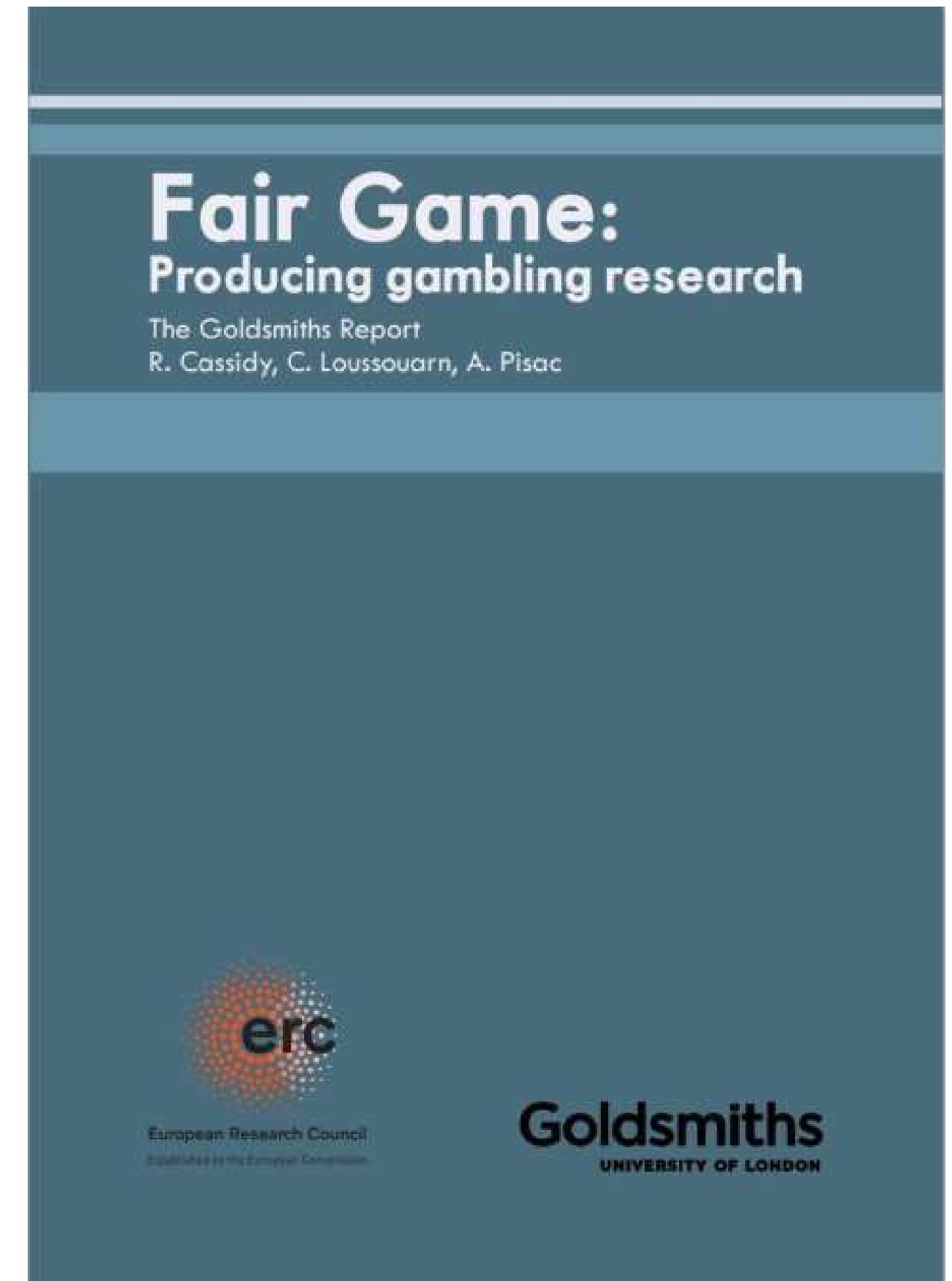
(Senior executive, 17 years in the betting industry)





The wider contribution of this report is to provide an illustration of the more general process through which research cultures are formed and maintained.

All research is embedded in webs of significance that anthropologists might refer to as 'culture'. Understanding how these relationships operate is the first step to critical participation in any field.  
(2013: 5)



# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**I hate this business.  
It's turned my soul  
black and made my  
hair fall out.**

# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**There are two models: strip them quick and move on, or do it slowly and try to retain them for longer. The economics have changed. When we started up you could just rape people. Nowadays it costs too much to find new mugs. You're better off taking them out for dinner... Amazing what people will do for a £10 bonus.**



# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**I've retired. I've sold up.  
I'm off to Spain. You've got  
to earn a living but you  
need to look in the mirror  
when you shave or else  
you'll cut your throat.**

# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**We all want the same: scholars, operators, governments, users of our products and even, God bless them, people providing much needed support for poor people who are suffering from various kinds of addictions. We want a safe, healthy industry, where people can enjoy our products and have fun in our wonderful facilities.**

# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**Our problem is that we have to be ‘it’s all about responsible gambling’. It’s not. And I don’t agree with it completely because I think people should be responsible for their own actions. The way it’s written in the regulation says we have to make sure that people aren’t doing their brains. I just think people are weak. If you get addicted it’s because you are weak, you have no will power.**



# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**we need to acknowledge the fact that there are people who are addicted to gambling, but their addiction is a brain issue, a brain disorder that is going to exist whether or not there is legalised gambling in the environment.**



# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**I don't want to see my customers ... I know they gamble, I know how much they gamble, I know when, but I don't think I'd want to sit with them in a casino and watch them do it. I might have banned them all the next day and said, 'God, you've all got problems!**

# VICIOUS GAMES

*Capitalism and Gambling*



REBECCA CASSIDY

**It was an echo chamber. It wasn't cynicism or greed. I went to work every day very happy and sincerely believing that I was doing a good job. What I realise now is that the job I was doing, the products I made were harming people. I honestly just didn't see it like that at the time. I was totally genuine and completely wrong at the same time.**



## Gambling industry increased spending on MPs tenfold in five years, data shows

Exclusive: with gambling white paper imminent, Guardian analysis shows sector pays out tens of thousands of pounds a year



Carolyn Harris, a campaigner for more regulation of gambling, said the industry's deep pockets were very obvious in and around parliament. Photographs UN. Parliament/Jessica Taylor/PA

Gambling companies and lobbyists have increased the amount they spend on MPs tenfold in five years, according to Guardian analysis that shows how the industry has become one of the best connected sectors in Westminster.

Data from publicly available parliamentary records show that dozens of Labour and Conservative MPs have received thousands of pounds' worth of corporate hospitality in the past few years, paid for by some of the country's biggest betting companies.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Science for Profit Model—How and why corporations influence science and the use of science in policy and practice

**Tess Legg \*, Jenny Hatchard, Anna B. Gilmore**

Department for Health, Tobacco Control Research Group, University of Bath, Bath, United Kingdom

\* [t.legg@bath.ac.uk](mailto:t.legg@bath.ac.uk)



Influencing the  
conduct and  
publication of  
science to  
skew evidence  
bases in  
industry's  
favour by

- Funding and undertaking 'safe' research
- Shaping and undermining external research
- Controlling reporting and suppressing publication of unfavourable science

# The size and economic costs of black market gambling in Great Britain

A report for the Betting and Gaming Council

September 2024

19 September 2024

**SHOCK NEW STUDY REVEALS  
1.5M BRITS STAKE UP TO  
£4.3BN ON ILLEGAL GAMBLING  
BLACK MARKET EACH YEAR**

## Fixed-odds betting terminals

**Rob Davies**

Mon 12 Nov 2018 07:00 CET

[Share](#)

This article is more than 6 years old

# Government's FOBT decision influenced by 'discredited' report

Documents seen by the Guardian cast doubt on whether figures should ever have played part in policy

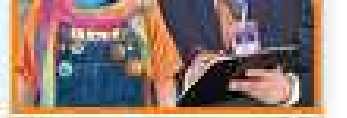


📷 Paddy Power said its own evidence suggested that some of the assumptions in the report were 'unrealistic'. Photograph: Alicia Canter/The Guardian

Influencing the interpretation of science to undermine unfavourable science and create a distorted picture of the evidence base by

- Attacking and misrepresenting science
- Monitoring and attacking scientists and organisations



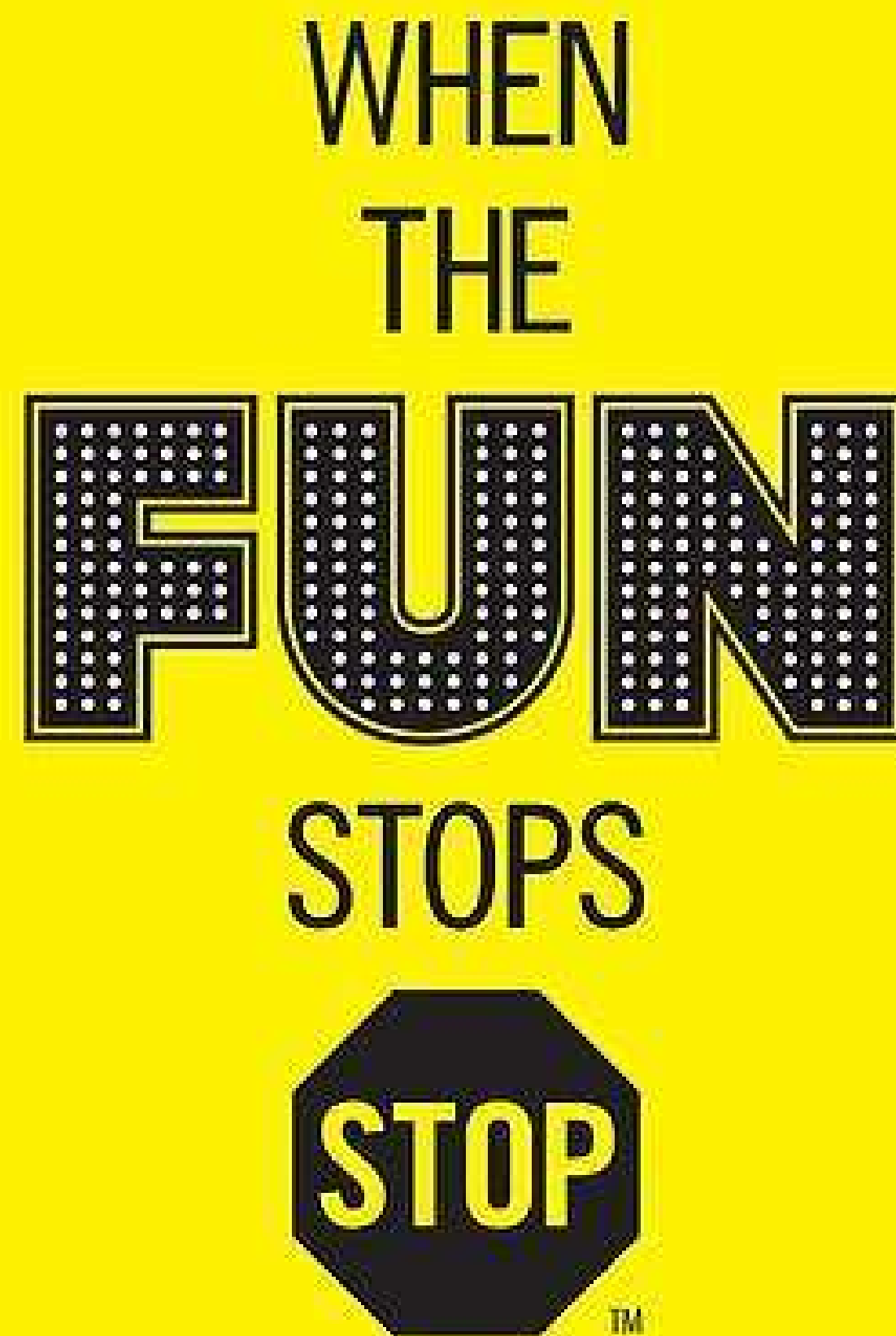


## The public health medicalisation of taking a punt

*Moral panic about gambling  
addiction poses an existential  
threat to racing*

Influencing the reach of science to create an echo chamber effect for industry's scientific messaging by

- Contracting messengers to create scientific echo chambers
- Funding, producing and disseminating materials which package science in industry friendly ways
- Using education, events and meetings to disseminate industry favourable scientific messages
- Maximising press coverage of industry favourable scientific messages



**gambleaware.co.uk**

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# *“When the Fun Stops, Stop”*: An analysis of the provenance, framing and evidence of a ‘responsible gambling’ campaign

**May CI van Schalkwyk<sup>1\*</sup>, Nason Maani<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Martin McKee<sup>1</sup>, Samantha Thomas<sup>4</sup>, Cécile Knai<sup>1,2</sup>, Mark Petticrew<sup>1,2</sup>**

**1** Faculty of Public Health and Policy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, United Kingdom, **2** SPECTRUM Consortium, London, United Kingdom, **3** School of Public Health, Boston University, Boston, MA, United States of America, **4** Faculty of Health, Institute for Health Transformation, School of Health and Soc. Dev., Deakin University, Geelong, Australia

\* [may.vanschalkwyk@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:may.vanschalkwyk@lshtm.ac.uk)

## 'Take Time to Think' gambling warning has no impact on betting behaviour

Clearer messaging on gambling harm is needed if the industry is to help customers moderate their gambling behaviour, experts have warned.

Academics have found that the widely used *Take Time to Think* slogan has no impact on people's behaviour while gambling, after testing its effectiveness in a virtual casino environment.



### Evaluation of the 'take time to think' safer gambling message: a randomised, online experimental study

Published online by Cambridge University Press: 08 March 2023

Philip W. S. Newall , Ty Hayes, Henrik Singmann, Leonardo Weiss-Cohen, Elliot A. Ludvig and Lukasz Walasek



[taketimetothink.co.uk](http://taketimetothink.co.uk)

BeGambleAware.org

18+



Manufacturing  
trust in industry  
and its scientific  
messaging



## Entain to pay £17 million for regulatory failures

17 August 2022

A gambling business is to pay £17 million for social responsibility and anti-money laundering failures at its online and land-based businesses.

Entain Group will pay £14 million for failures at its online business [LC International Limited which runs 13 websites](#) including [ladbrokes.com](#), [coral.co.uk](#) and [foxybingo.com](#).

**⌚ This article is more than 3 months old**

# Revealed: gambling firms secretly sharing users' data with Facebook without permission

## Meta accounts of those affected flooded with ads for casinos and betting sites

## We didn't click 'consent' on any gambling website. So how did Facebook know where we'd been?

**Shanti Das and Jon  
Ungoed-Thomas**

Sat 8 Feb 2025 18:00 GMT

 **Share**

■ A selection of ads shown to the Facebook user. There is no suggestion these advertisers shared data unlawfully. Illustration: Philip Law/Observer Design

# TOWARDS A SMOKEFREE GENERATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

Each day, roughly  
**100 children**  
start smoking

**Over half** of the people  
who continue to smoke  
die because of the  
consequences of smoking

Each year **20,000 people**  
in the Netherlands die because  
of smoking, and several thousand  
die because of passive smoking

**More people die** because of  
smoking in the Netherlands than  
because of drinking, drug use, crime  
and traffic accidents combined

Smoking decreases  
your lifespan by  
**10 to 12 years**  
on average



## WHAT IS OUR AIM?

**To protect youth from tobacco.** We strive for a society in which parents of children born from 2017 onwards will be able to raise them without any exposure to smoking and passive smoking. We also try to make sure these children never decide to start smoking themselves.

## HOW?

**Through measures** that protect children from tobacco smoke and the temptation to start smoking in each stage of their development.



The Alliantie Nederland Rookvrij (Dutch Alliance for a Smokefree Society) is fighting for a society in which people no longer suffer from or die because of the consequences of smoking.

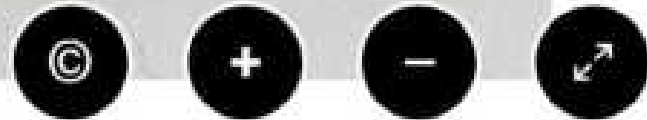






Margaret Mead sitting on a canoe in Samoa, ca. 1926. Gelatin silver print. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (50b)















“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead

# THANKS

Goldsmiths  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

[r.cassidy@gold.ac.uk](mailto:r.cassidy@gold.ac.uk)

Professor of Anthropology, Goldsmiths

