



# Gambling/Gaming Addiction in the Era of New Technologies

---

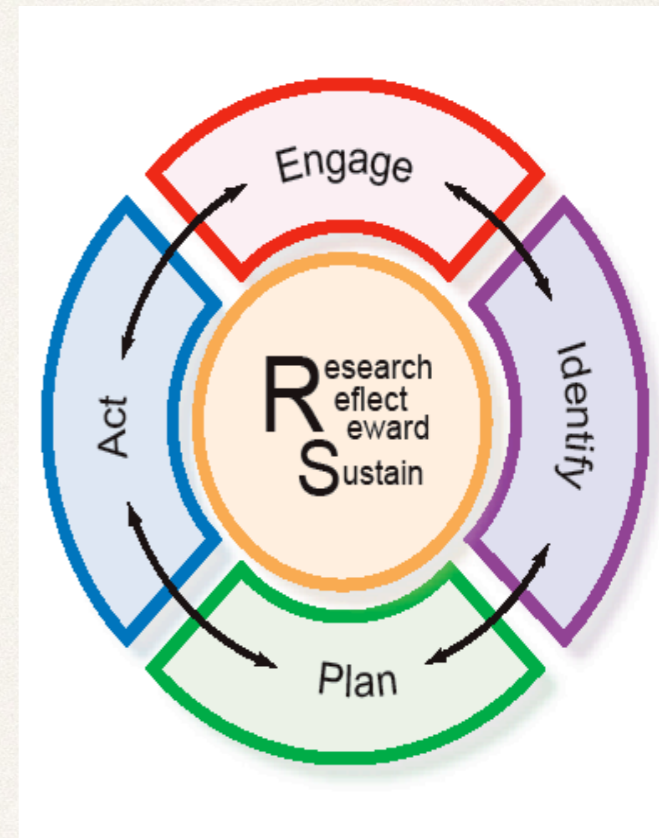
Jennifer Reynolds, PhD  
Concordia University



# About me

---

- ❖ Postdoctoral Fellow at the Research Chair on Gambling, Concordia University
- ❖ PhD from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto
- ❖ Virtual ethnographer interested in the convergence of gambling and gaming
- ❖ Youth gambling prevention using participatory action research focusing on youth media and visual methodologies



**Youth Voices**



# Public Health & Gambling Using the Internet & Media



**PARENTBET.NET**  
A SOURCE ABOUT YOUTH GAMBLING  
ESPECIALLY FOR PARENTS

**YouthBet.net**

UNDERSTANDING THE ODDS | GAMBLING INDUSTRY IN ONTARIO | FACTS ABOUT YOUTH GAMBLING | MEDIA LITERACY | DOES MY CHILD HAVE A PROBLEM? | HEALTHY GAMBLING | LINKS & RESOURCES

**Our Mandate**  
[Learn more about Parentbet.net, Youthbet.net, and Mandate](#)

**Teaching Resources**  
[Try these fun tools to teach youth about healthy gambling!](#)

**Contact Us**  
[We are always looking for ways to improve our site. Please let us know how we are doing!](#)

*A supportive parent or guardian is the "best bet" to promote healthy lifestyles -including healthy gambling.*

**LINKS & RESOURCES**  
[Learn more about resources](#)  
[LEARN MORE](#)

**YOUR OWN GAMBLING**  
[How does your own gambling behaviour rate?](#)  
[LEARN MORE](#)

**DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS**  
[When is the right time to talk to my kids?](#)  
[LEARN MORE](#)

The page features a navigation menu with various topics, a central image of a family, and three main content sections with corresponding icons: playing cards, a horse race, and a family conversation.



# Competing perspectives - gaming vs gambling

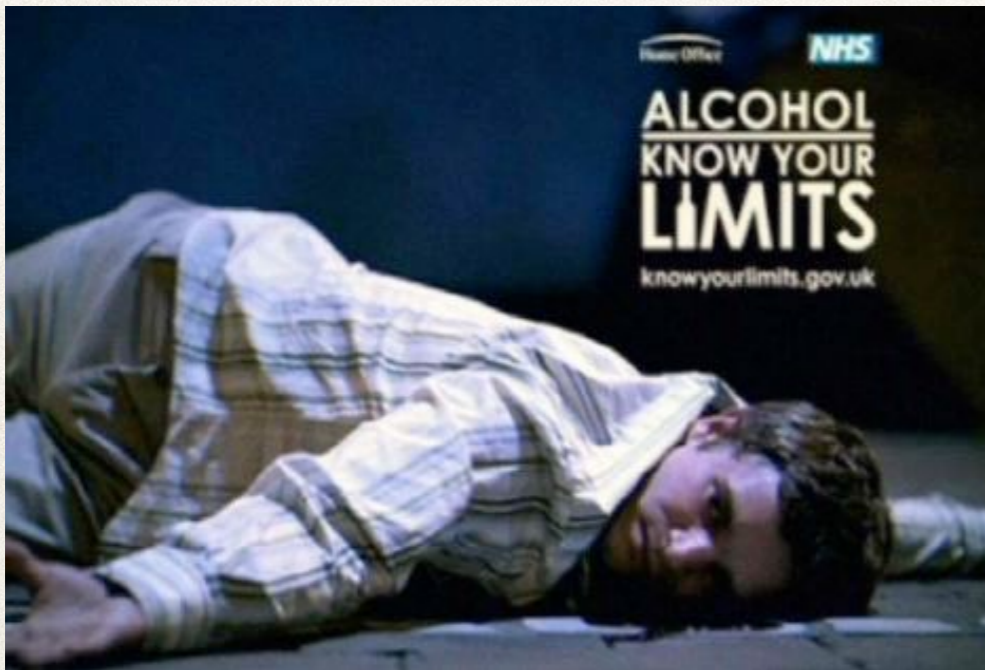
---

- ❖ Enthusiastic
- ❖ Engrossing
- ❖ Immersive
- ❖ Flow (in the Zone)

- ❖ Addictive
- ❖ Problematic
- ❖ Excessive
- ❖ Compulsive



# Responsibility doctrine?



**Are You a Responsible Gambler?**  
Winners know when to STOP

Anyone can become a problem gambler, regardless of age, race, religion, education, economic status or moral character. If you think you may have a gambling problem, or know somebody who does, don't chance the odds. Discreet professional help is only a phone call away.

For free counselling phone our tollfree counselling line on 0800 006 008

The advertisement features a yellow background with several dice and playing cards scattered across it. The text is in red and black.

**RESPONSIBLE  
ALCOHOL USE**

**KNOW WHEN TO STOP**

A row of four glasses of alcohol: a tall glass of beer, a glass of red wine, a glass of white wine, and a glass of whiskey with ice. The text is in red and black.

**PLEASE GAMBLE  
RESPONSIBLY**

NATIONAL GAMBLING HELPLINE  
1800 858 858

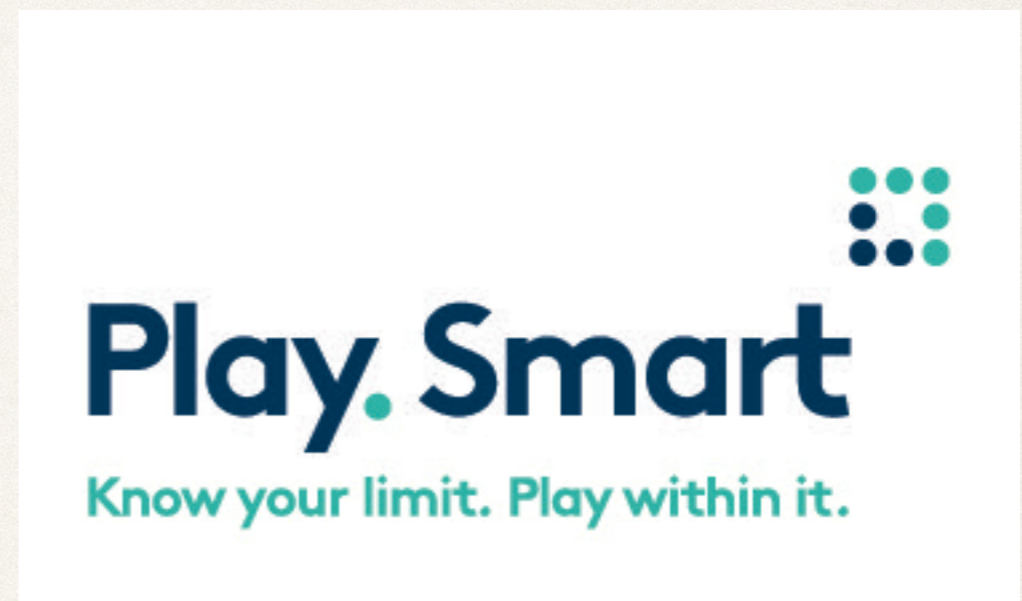
A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white short-sleeved top, stands with her hands clasped in front of her. The background is a solid red color.



---

“How can they expect people to gamble responsibly when they build machines that make them [players] behave irresponsibly?”

- Natasha Dow Schüll (p.274)






# What's at stake?

"I lost everything in 28 minutes" - Ireland's youth are gambling with their future

Newstalk.com has spoken to gambling addicts over how it affected them



File photo | Image: RollingNews.ie

10:53 18 Apr 2016  
Richard Chambers  
10:53 Monday 18 April 2016

Ireland is home to an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 problem gamblers....

Answer a survey question to continue reading this content

Question 1 of 8 or fewer:

sign in become a supporter subscribe search jobs dating more International

# theguardian

UK world sport football opinion culture business lifestyle fashion environment tech travel all sections

home > tech

## Games I was a games addict

Children are falling asleep in the classroom after playing computer games all night, a concerned teacher warned this week. Recovered addict Tom Meltzer knows why they're hooked

BBC NEWS

Watch One-Minute World News

Last Updated: Wednesday, 10 August 2005, 10:16 GMT 11:16 UK

E-mail this to a friend Printable version

## S Korean dies after games session

A South Korean man has died after reportedly playing an online computer game for 50 hours with few breaks.



The 28-year-old man collapsed after playing the game Starcraft at an internet cafe in the city of Taegu, according to South Korean authorities.

Online gaming is treated like a sport in South Korea

The man had not slept properly, and had eaten very little during his marathon session, said police.

Multi-player gaming in South Korea is extremely popular thanks to its fast and widespread broadband network.

Games are televised and professional players are treated, as well as paid, like sports stars.

Professional gamers there attract huge sums in sponsorship

Africa Americas Asia-Pacific Europe Middle East South Asia UK Business Health Science & Environment Technology Entertainment Also in the news Video and Audio Programmes Have Your Say In Pictures

MailOnline

Home News U.S. Sport TV&Showbiz Australia Femall Health Science Money

Latest Headlines News World News Arts Headlines France Pictures Most read Wires Discounts

Great fares from flyporter.com

## Games like Candy Crush 'are addictive and cause childhood gambling problems even when they don't involve money'

- Report also criticised Bingo Friendly, which features cartoon characters
- Players are supposed to be over 18 but younger ones get around the limit
- Nottingham Trent University expert: A '15 minute' session can last five hours

## Poker Faces, and They Haven't Started Shaving

By PETER APPLEBOME

LARCHMONT, N.Y., Oct. 28 — The table was antique mahogany. The chips were casino-quality clay in a gleaming, Bond-like steel carrying case. The game was, of course, No Limit Texas Hold 'Em, except for the players who had already lost their buy-in and joined the poker and dice games in another room. Records of earnings and losses for the 15 regulars and 7 occasional players were kept on an Excel spreadsheet on one of the organizers' computers.

After 11 p.m. or so, the winners pocketed their cash. The players snacked on popcorn and chips and whatever else they could forage from the kitchen, argued amiably about who was the biggest poker addict, and then ran into the ample backyard, where the floodlights allowed for a high-energy game of midnight football, the perfect way for a group of ninth-graders to end an evening out.



Peeking at the cards of one of the 13- and 14-year-old players in a game Friday night in Larchmont in Westchester County.

Susan Stava for The New York Times



# Gambling-related harms

---

- ❖ Negative consequences
  - ❖ problem gambling/addiction
  - ❖ family dysfunction
  - ❖ substance abuse & mental health disorders
  - ❖ suicide
  - ❖ financial difficulties & poverty
  - ❖ criminal behaviour



Are all games created equal?



# Convergence - social network gambling

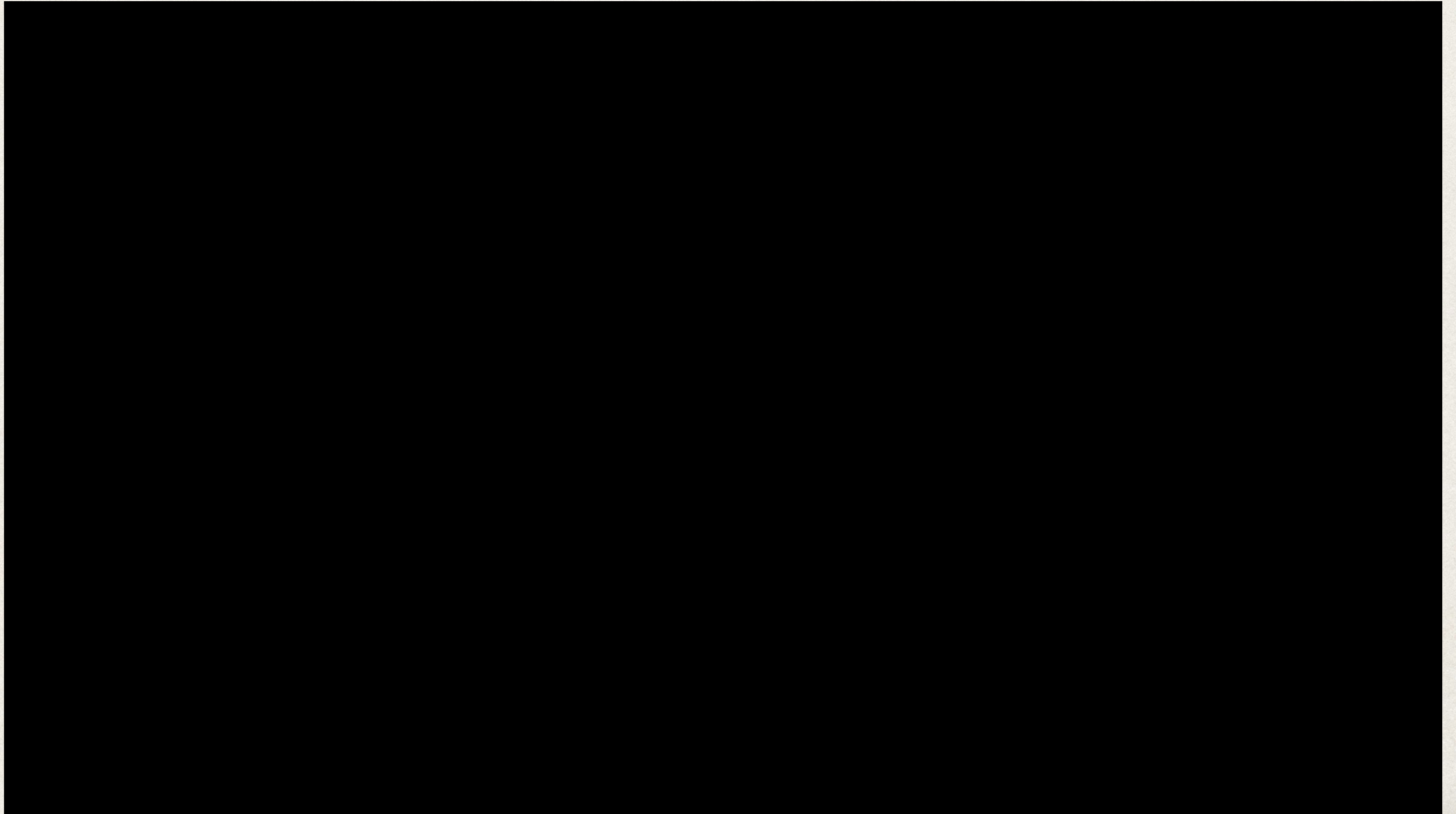
---

Games which are based on gambling-  
like activities  
(e.g. poker, casino, bingo or betting)  
played on social networking sites



‘Freemium isn’t free’

---





# Game design & intention

---

“Instead of forensically dissecting the content packaged in games, we should look closely at the system of design and distribution that’s led them out of teen bedrooms [via consoles] and into the hands of a broader audience via computers and smartphones”



# Facebook

---

- ❖ Worldwide, there are over 1.86 billion monthly active Facebook users (Facebook MAUs) which is a 17 percent increase year over year.
- ❖ There are 1.15 billion mobile daily active users (Mobile DAU) for December 2016, an increase of 23 percent year-over-year.
- ❖ Age 25 to 34, at 29.7% of users, is the most common age demographic.
- ❖ 42% of marketers report that Facebook is critical or important to their business.



# What we know

---

- ❖ Top 10 grossing iPhone apps (US), three are currently casino games - Big Fish Casino, Slotomania, Double Down Casino
- ❖ Poker captures 47% of social network gambling market
- ❖ Social network gambling games serve as a “poker training ground” for youth to migrate play over to real-money
- ❖ Youth who make in-game micro-transactions are 8xs more likely to transition to real-money gambling



# Causes for concern...

---

- ❖ Low barrier to entry (age 13)
  - ❖ early exposure to gambling
  - ❖ normalization of gambling
- ❖ Unregulated
- ❖ Unethical game design elements that shape the terrain
- ❖ Predicative personalization technology/social data optimization (i.e. **Big Data**)

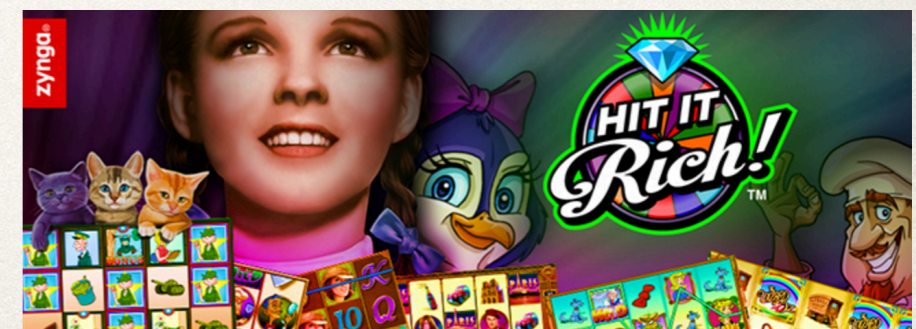


Virtual Ethnographic Case Study -  
Zynga Poker



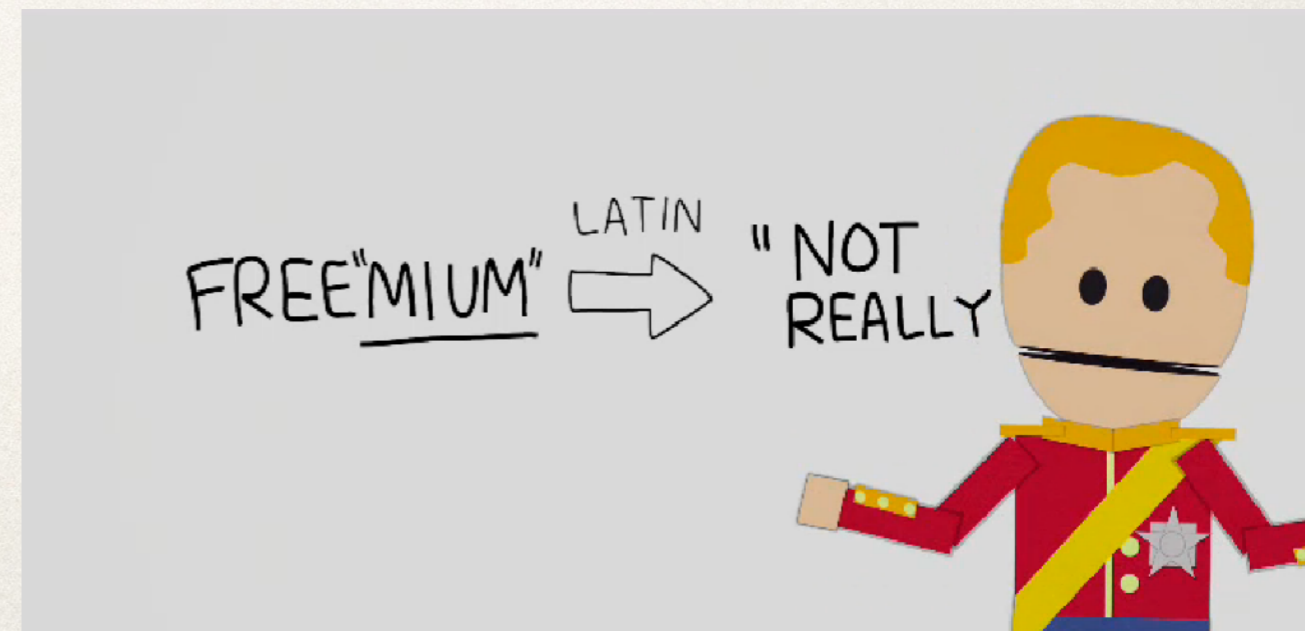
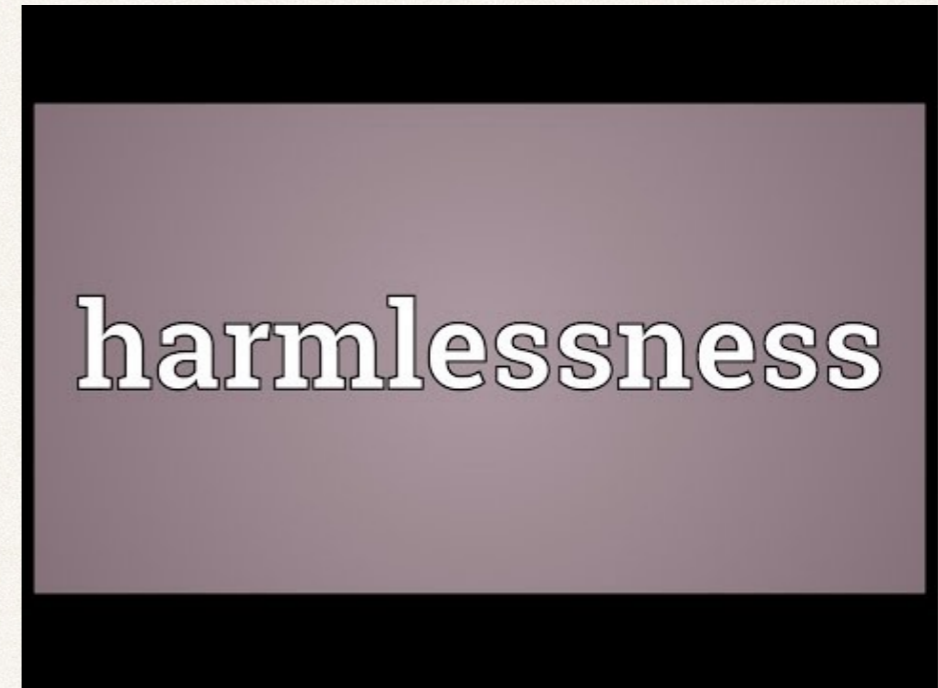
“We did anything possible to just get revenues so that we could grow and be a real business”

-Mark Pincus  
(2009)





# Constructed discourses





# 5-Step players journey framework

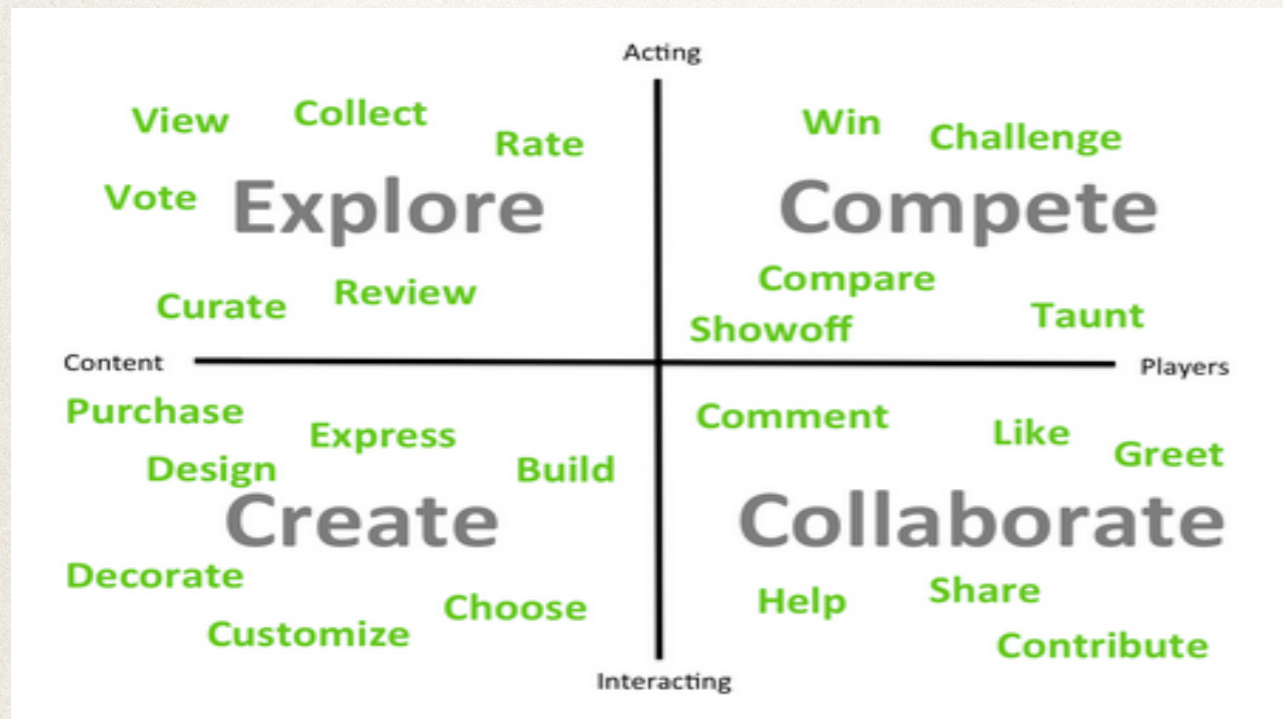
---

What design elements contribute to the games “stickiness”?

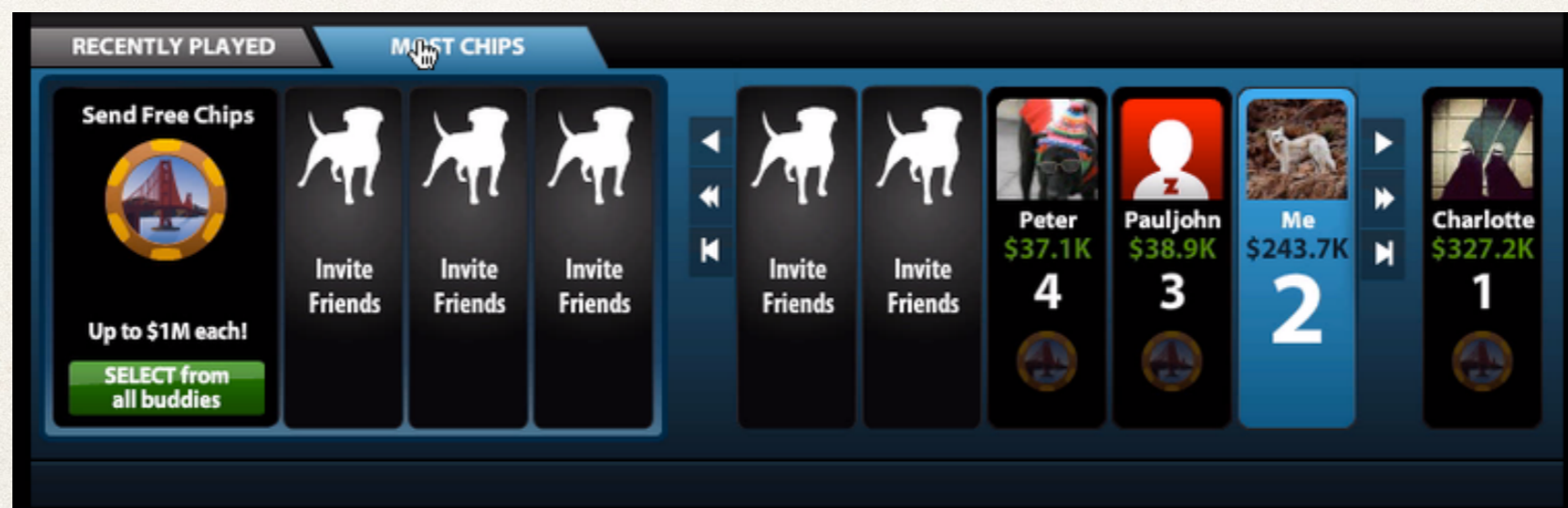
- 1) Player Insight
- 2) Motivation
- 3) Lifecycle
- 4) Progress
- 5) Loops



# Player insight

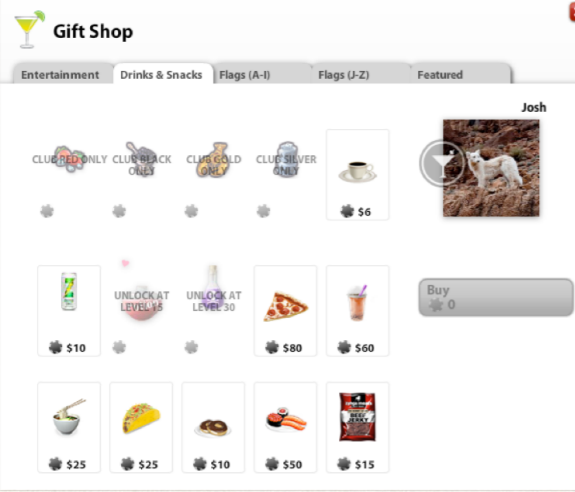


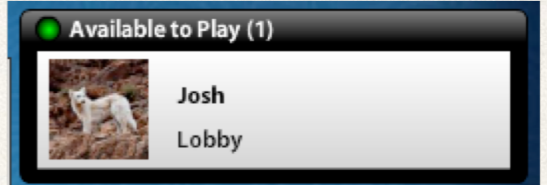
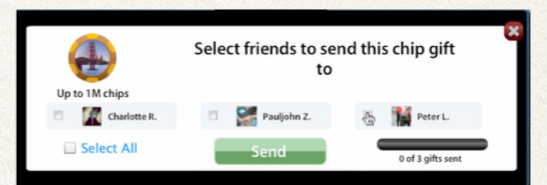





- \* Game elements custom tailored to suit dynamics of player
- \* Texas Hold'em is competitive by nature – best 5-card hand wins



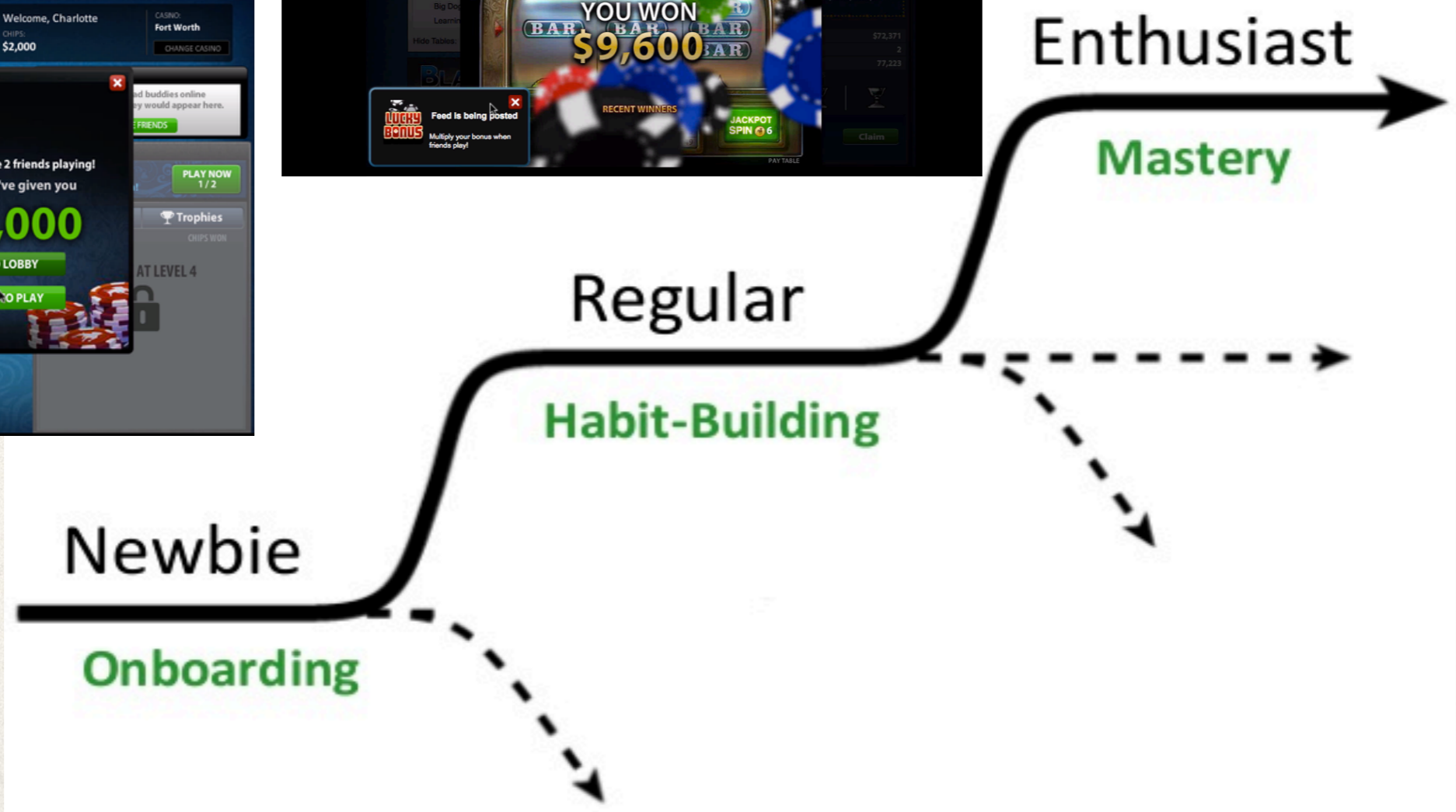
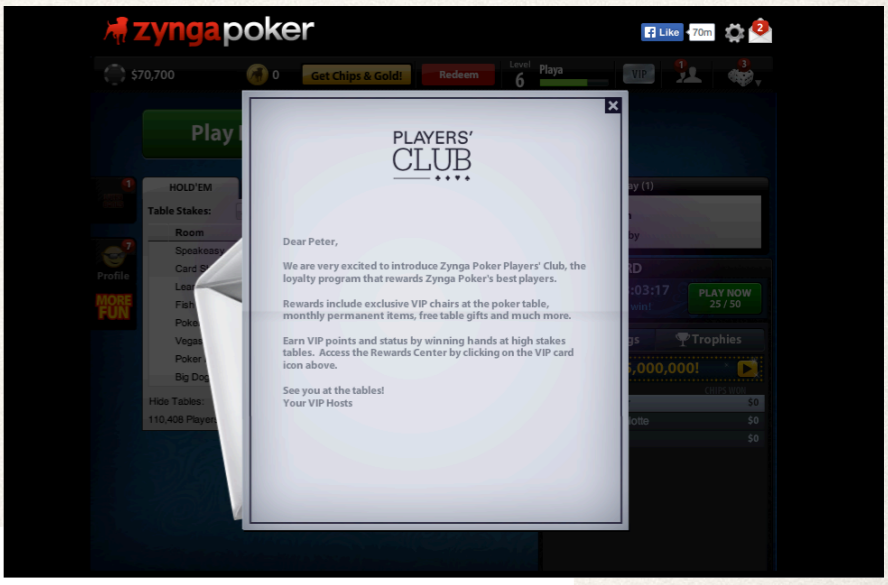


# Motivation

Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness																																																																																					
<p><b>Purchase Virtual Goods</b></p> 	<p><b>Progress Markers/Experience Points</b></p>  <p><b>Achievements</b></p> 	<p><b>Connect with Friends</b></p>  <p><b>Available to Play (1)</b></p>  <p><b>Select friends to send this chip gift to</b></p> 																																																																																					
<p><b>Avatar/Profile Photo</b></p> 	<p><b>Collectibles</b></p> 																																																																																						
	<p><b>Unlocks</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th> <th>Name</th> <th>XP Needed</th> <th>Chip Gift</th> <th>Game Gift Unlocked</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>Fish</td><td>0</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>Fish</td><td>5</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>Fish</td><td>30</td><td>10</td><td>Energy Drink</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>Playa</td><td>55</td><td>25</td><td>Sunflower</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>Playa</td><td>104</td><td></td><td>Pizza</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>Under Dog</td><td>195</td><td>50</td><td>Bacon Flavored Vodka, Beef Jerky, Hookah</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>Under Dog</td><td>275</td><td>75</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>Big Dog</td><td>395</td><td>100</td><td>Love Potion</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>Big Dog</td><td>515</td><td></td><td>Vegemite</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>Cowboy</td><td>595</td><td>150</td><td>Cupid</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>Shark</td><td>775</td><td>200</td><td>Piipe</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td>Rounder</td><td>925</td><td>250</td><td>Poison, Angel</td></tr> <tr><td>35</td><td>Marksman</td><td>1075</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>40</td><td>Pro</td><td>1225</td><td>500</td><td>Devil</td></tr> <tr><td>45</td><td>Star</td><td>1375</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>50</td><td>Legend</td><td>1525</td><td>1000</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Level	Name	XP Needed	Chip Gift	Game Gift Unlocked	1	Fish	0			2	Fish	5	5		3	Fish	30	10	Energy Drink	5	Playa	55	25	Sunflower	7	Playa	104		Pizza	10	Under Dog	195	50	Bacon Flavored Vodka, Beef Jerky, Hookah	12	Under Dog	275	75		15	Big Dog	395	100	Love Potion	18	Big Dog	515		Vegemite	20	Cowboy	595	150	Cupid	25	Shark	775	200	Piipe	30	Rounder	925	250	Poison, Angel	35	Marksman	1075			40	Pro	1225	500	Devil	45	Star	1375			50	Legend	1525	1000		<p><b>Skill Challenges</b></p> 
Level	Name	XP Needed	Chip Gift	Game Gift Unlocked																																																																																			
1	Fish	0																																																																																					
2	Fish	5	5																																																																																				
3	Fish	30	10	Energy Drink																																																																																			
5	Playa	55	25	Sunflower																																																																																			
7	Playa	104		Pizza																																																																																			
10	Under Dog	195	50	Bacon Flavored Vodka, Beef Jerky, Hookah																																																																																			
12	Under Dog	275	75																																																																																				
15	Big Dog	395	100	Love Potion																																																																																			
18	Big Dog	515		Vegemite																																																																																			
20	Cowboy	595	150	Cupid																																																																																			
25	Shark	775	200	Piipe																																																																																			
30	Rounder	925	250	Poison, Angel																																																																																			
35	Marksman	1075																																																																																					
40	Pro	1225	500	Devil																																																																																			
45	Star	1375																																																																																					
50	Legend	1525	1000																																																																																				



# Lifecycle





# Loops

Limited offer, get 2x more XP for 24 hours with Zynga Poker!



**zyngapoker™** Spread the news.

**FOR 24 HOURS GET 2X MORE XP WHEN YOU PLAY ZYNGA POKER**

Hey Josh,  
Come back to Zynga Poker and get twice more XP for 24 hours!

[Play Now](#)

Don't want to receive email notifications? [Unsubscribe here](#) or [Adjust Your Message Settings](#).

© 2013, Zynga Inc. 699 8th Street San Francisco, CA 94103 [Privacy Policy](#).

Here's a recap of some of the #rewards we're giving away in #Zynga #Poker today! (Remember: You can get only one type of reward per day.)

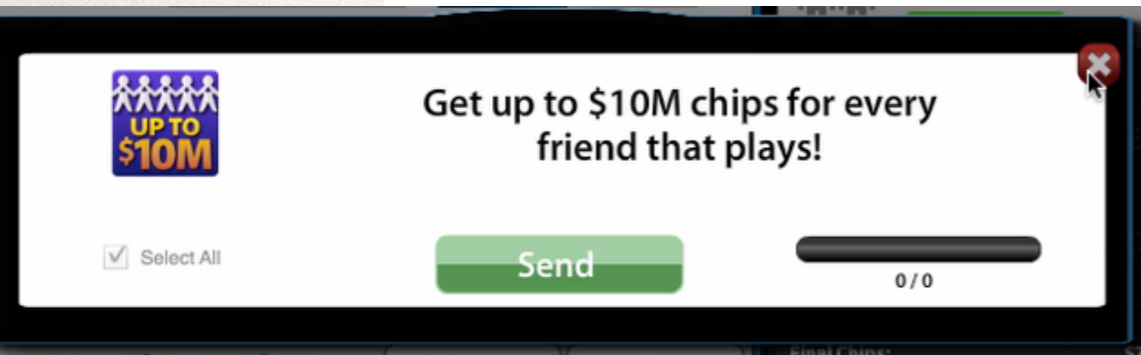
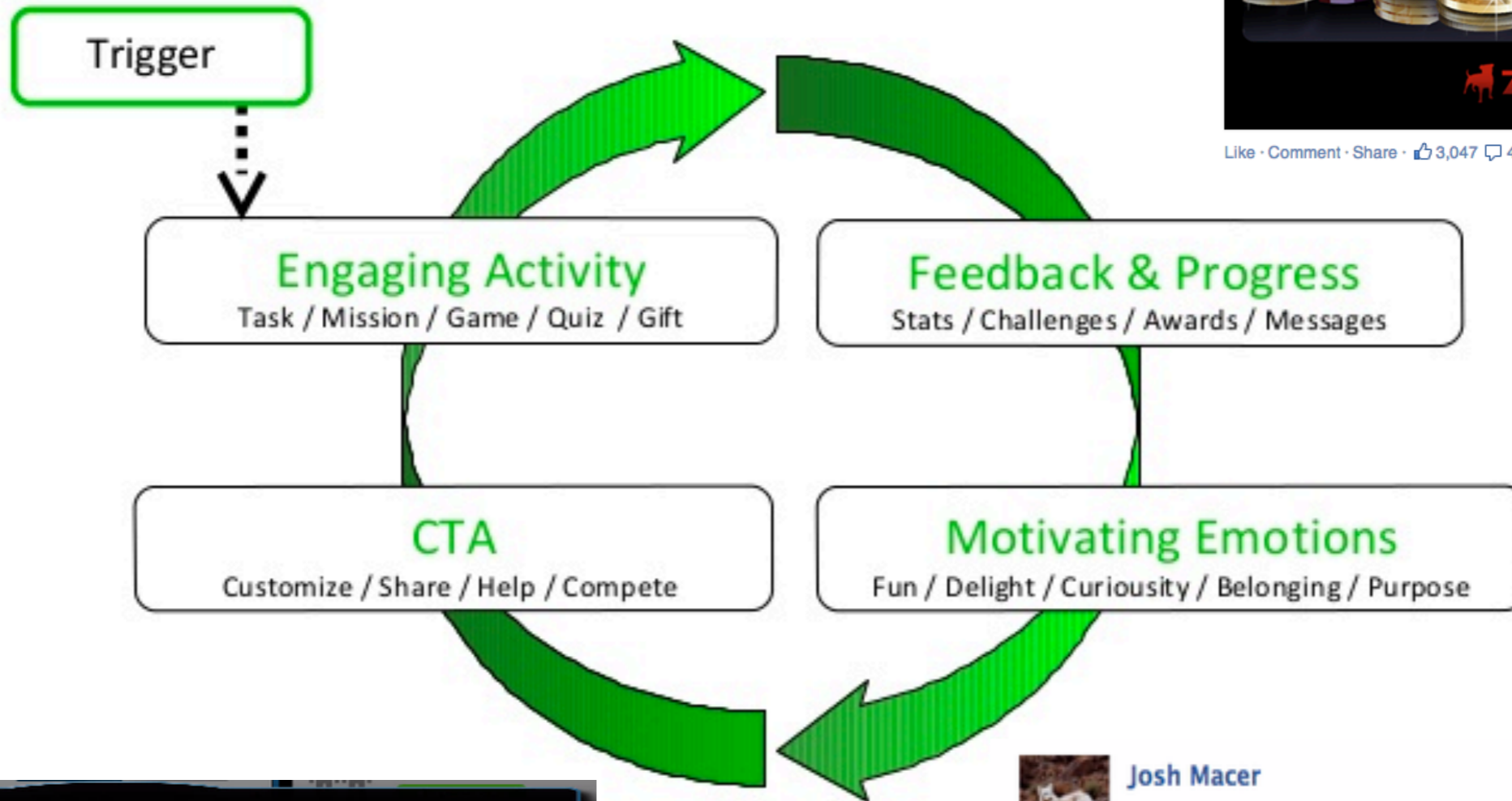
<http://zynga.tm/b0o9> <- Blue Dice collectible!

<http://zynga.tm/e0l6> <- Shootout Round 1 skip.

<http://zynga.tm/e0l7> <- FREE Poker Chips!... [See More](#)



Like · Comment · Share · 3,047 445 356



**UP TO \$10M**

Get up to \$10M chips for every friend that plays!

Select All [Send](#) 0/0



Josh Macer



Watch what happens to me!

You have got to see my incredible hand to believe it. Watch and get up to \$1M chips.

Like · Comment · Share · Claim up to \$1M chips now · 11 seconds ago via Texas HoldEm Poker · [Only Me](#)



# Youth Perceptions

---

## Gambling Lite

“ ZP is a form of gambling. Even though it’s just virtual currency and it doesn’t really affect your finances, you are still risking something, you’re still betting on something”

“It’s entertainment to myself...unless I actually spend money and buy virtual currency, then I don’t think you have anything on the line...when you put money into the game it would definitely be a form of gambling”





“I started playing poker when I first got onto Facebook, which was in ninth grade. I remember thinking ‘Hey, I could probably play with all sorts of people’, and I’m not betting real money”

- Chung



# Social acceptability

---



- \* A history of candy cigarette use has been shown to be associated with higher levels of current or even smoking amongst adults (Klein et al. 2007)
- \* WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (2003) recommended to prohibit the production & sale of candy and toy products as they appeal to minors.
- \* American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggests children should not use candy cigarettes because of the way they promote social acceptability of tobacco to children.



“The free-to-play structure isn’t just a business model that somehow got hurriedly tacked onto a game that might have been commercialized in any number of other ways. Rather, it’s a sophisticated new gloss on the classic playing-for-time model pioneered by the coin-op games of the seventies and eighties – only instead of coaxing pocket change from users, it extracts a kind of surplus value that, in the new digital economy, is infinitely more valuable: it embeds within the actual gaming experience the relentless quest for attention, word-of-mouth, and (ultimately) remuneration that drives virtually every other overcapitalized form of online activity”



Thank You!

Jennifer Reynolds, PhD  
Concordia University  
jenniferreynolds00@gmail.com  
Twitter: Dosha00