

# It's A Crime-ing Shame

**F**act: Until mid-year 1993, gambling in any public forum was illegal and punishable with jail time under The Quebec Criminal Code.

Miraculously, in September 1993, when the Casino De Montréal opened its doors, not only was gambling suddenly legal, it was glorified, sexified and was touted as sheer entertainment.

How can gambling have gone from a criminal offense to a legalized pastime?

Simple; the government, our elected officials, found a way to make money off its already overtaxed population.

Since Bugsy Siegel got Las Vegas going in the 40's and 50's, it became no secret that gamblers 'lose'. Now, if gamblers lose, one must deduce that casino operators (government)



**Howard P. Riback**  
*The Winning Hand*  
Times

'win'.

One cannot possibly think or believe that our government has its citizen's best interests at heart. Let's face it, we all know that, sooner or later, prostitution and/or legalizing drugs is not too far away once the same government figures out a way to make money.

The mere fact that since the first Loto Québec prize was handed out in March 1970, until today, lotteries and the casinos have blossomed into a 6 billion dollar industry in our province alone.

According to Quebec statistics, there are almost 60 000 compulsive gamblers. Of that number, the vast majority of pathological gamblers lie, cheat, steal and commit crimes to feed their habit.

Crime itself has been on the rise in this province with much of its growth due to loan-sharking for the

purposes of gambling and gambling debts. These crimes can include passing bad checks, embezzlement, forgery, insurance fraud, robbery or assault, office theft, credit card theft, Ponzi schemes and credit card debt (people borrowing money with no intention of ever paying it back). Gambling often leads to destroying families, which, of course, is the biggest crime possible.

To gamble, one needs money. And when a pathological gambler finds himself without funds, he'll resort to anything, including crime.

Prosecutors and the judicial system in general, are getting tougher and

tougher on white collar crimes committed for gambling reasons, which is somewhat hypocritical seeing as how it is the same provincial government that allows the lotteries and casinos to have it in the first place.

Here's a crazy thought: Loto Québec loves taking pictures of its winners and use them for advertising promotions. Why don't they take pictures of all the losers and hang them up and see how business will flourish. Does Kodak make enough film?

Gambling; the art of losing money legally.

I rest my case.



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## GAMBLING (ADDICTION) / ANXIETY SEMINAR

*Howard Riback and an anxiety expert*

*David Kynan are giving a seminar*

**Monday night October 26<sup>th</sup>,**

**6:45PM - 8:45PM**

*at the Novotel Hotel on Mountain Street between St Catherine St and Rene Levesque.*

**Admission is free.**

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