



WHY IS HISTORICAL COMPARATIVE RESEARCH NEEDED IN GAMBLING STUDIES?

Post-doctoral researcher Riitta Matilainen
Centre for Consumer Society Research, University of Helsinki
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- The point of this presentation is to show you why historical comparative research (cross-national, temporally comparative and thematically coherent) is something that we as scholars of gambling should engage in.
- This will be done by comparing the gambling cultures and regulations of Finland ("Western") and German Democratic Republic (GDR; Eastern Bloc) after the second world war until the end of the 1980s.



IMPORTANCE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

- ❑ Gambling is a cultural and social phenomenon that is firmly anchored in certain time and place. Gambling discourses and practices vary greatly in different societies and different contexts, depending on the organization, social meanings and moralities of gambling (Matilainen 2017).
- ❑ Ideas about gambling have a tendency to stabilize and become naturalized obliterating the complex historical processes that have led to certain discourses and practices prevailing over others (Cassidy et al 2013).



WHAT SHOULD COMPARATIVE RESEARCH BE LIKE IN GAMBLING STUDIES?

- ❑ By comparative research I mean research not only on different countries and their regulation of gambling but research concentrating also on gambling spaces, gender, class, transnational influences and other phenomena related to gambling (alcohol consumption, tobacco smoking, and criminality).
- ❑ The comparative research usually tends to focus on change. However, in addition to change, the more subtle stability of attitudes, discourses, and practices needs to be taken into consideration when engaged in comparative research.

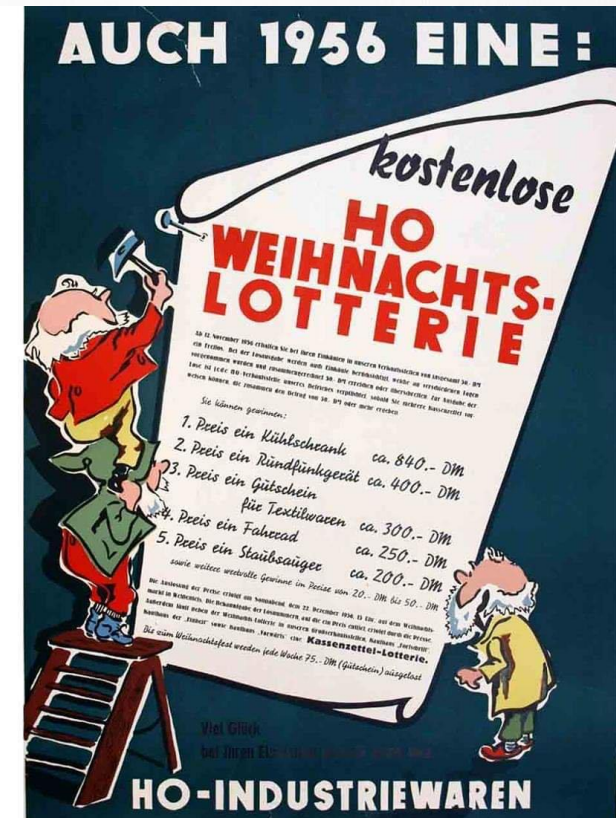


COMPARATIVE HISTORICAL METHOD

- ❑ Comparative methods is flexible as “It consists in looking beyond the national framework and in situating specific problems, constellations or structures in at least two different contexts, which are linked by a common problematic, in most cases the tertium comparationis. In comparison, historians try to better characterize the two phenomena being compared and to look at similarities and differences in causal analysis.” (Haupt 2007, 699-700)
- ❑ It is necessary to limit the number of case studies a comparative study can analyze because of the differences or similarities of primary sources. Less is more as historian needs to situate all the materials in a broader framework and contextualize them. (Haupt 2007, 70).
- ❑ Work relying on secondary literature should be accompanied by a careful study of the current historiographical debates in the units being compared. (Haupt 2007, 703).
- ❑ It should be obvious that “This comparison follows neither the logic of comparison that historical actors are using nor the logic of the historical material. Problems and theoretical interests determine comparison and not the other way around.” (Haupt 2007, 704).



GAMBLING IN THE GDR



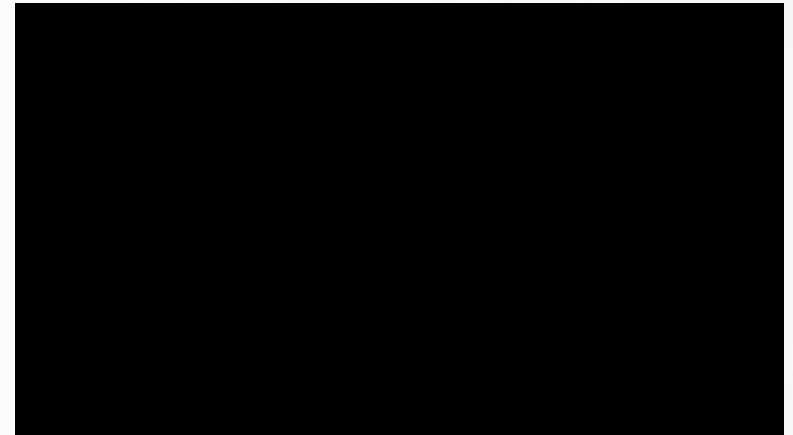
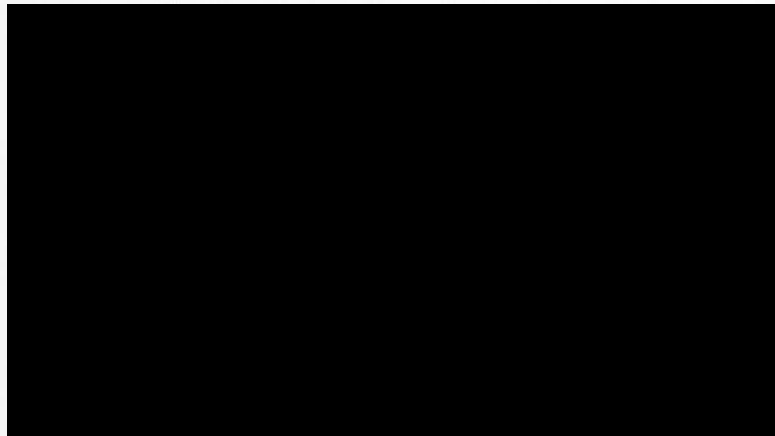


GAMBLING IN FINLAND





TWO ADS FOR GDR AND FINNISH LOTTO IN THE 1970S





EASTERN VS WESTERN BLOC?

- ❑ Finland was more in line with the Eastern Bloc countries, such as Bulgaria, Italy, Yugoslavia, Poland, Romania, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the Soviet Union, where lotto was already introduced in the 1960s than with the capitalist West. However, the lotto was already also running in Austria and in West Germany.
- ❑ The timing of the introduction of Lotto differs from that in most of the Western countries, as it was introduced during the heyday of the construction and implementation of the Finnish welfare state and not later on in the 1980s or even in the 1990s (like the UK National Lottery) when both the financing and ideological basis of the welfare state were facing a crisis. (Ahonen 2019)



CLASS DICHOTOMIES OF INTEREST

Middle-class

- Hardworking
- Frugal
- Rational
- Tidy
- Future-oriented
- Can postpone their fulfillment
- Adultlike
- Can provide protection
- God-fearing

Working class:

- Lazy
- Prodigal
- Irrational, superstitious
- Dirty
- Lives for the now
- Cannot control their emotions
- Childlike
- In need of paternalizing
- Blasphemous



GENDER DICHOTOMIES OF INTEREST

Men:

- A subject; an agent
- Violence
- Bread-winners and responsible for family's financial well-being
- Public

Women:

- An object; a victim
- Controllers of men's behaviour
- Emotional backbones of family
- Private; family centred
- Seen through their reproductional role



CONCLUSIONS: THE USEFULNESS OF COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

- How do (Anglophone) gambling research theories and models apply when one studies a society that is not capitalist?
- This kind of research question would be impossible without the use of comparative method.
- Cross-national, temporally comparative and thematically coherent (class, gender) comparative research is needed.
- The GDR offers an interesting example of a socialist society where both private and public gambling flourished whereas in Finland gambling was tamed by the state and the gambling companies and became a part of everyday lives of Finnish citizens.



LITERATURE

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**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION!**

riitta.matilainen@helsinki.fi