

# GAMBLING RESEARCH

ALBERTA  
GAMBLING  
RESEARCH  
INSTITUTE



## Gambling in Canada the Focus of Institute 'Virtual' Conference



The year 2021 marks the Institute's 20th anniversary of its founding. Over the course of these past twenty years, Institute-funded investigators have played a significant role in advancing the current state of scientific knowledge about gambling in Canada. To celebrate this achievement, the theme of this year's conference, to be held April 27-29, is "Gambling in Canada: Current Research & Future Directions." More specifically, it will feature the results of the AGRI National Project as well as profile the major gambling-related research and policy initiatives that are occurring across the country.

Speakers during the first day and a half of the conference will discuss findings from the AGRI National Project, an Institute-funded three-year investigation into gambling and problem gambling in Canada. Included will be presentations from research team members about Canada's most recent prevalence study, the impact of COVID, cannabis legalization, harm minimization, responsible gambling measures, problem gambling, and indigenous gambling. The remainder of day two and the entirety of day three will see presentations on

a wide range of gambling-related topics by influential researchers from across the country.

This year's event will be held entirely online and include research posters and networking break-out rooms.

[Event registration](#) is free but limited to the first 300 conference registrants. Additional details about the program, presenters and topics are available from the [Conference 2021 page](#) on the Institute website.

The primary aim of the Alberta Gambling Research Institute, a consortium of the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, and Lethbridge, is to support academic research related to gambling.

### MISSION

To facilitate evidence-based broad research that informs gambling public policy and educates Albertans and the wider audience about the effects of gambling.

## Ph.D. Student Gillian Russell Receives Durand Jacobs Award

McGill University's International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors recently announced that Gillian Russell was the recipient of the 2020 Durand Jacobs Award for her article entitled "Implicit Memory Associations and Video Gaming" which has been published in the journal *Addictive Behaviors*. The Durand Jacobs Award recognizes outstanding work related to the psychology of addictive behaviors, and is dedicated to the late Dr. Durand Jacobs' lifelong efforts to help mentor students.

Gillian Russell holds a BSc in Psychology from the University of British Columbia Okanagan, an MSc in Psychology from the University of Lethbridge, and is currently in the final year of her Ph.D. in Evolution and Behaviour at the University of Lethbridge. Her dissertation research is examining the longitudinal influence of implicit memory associations on gambling behaviours in both adolescent and adult populations. She is currently an Institute scholarship recipient as well as principal investigator on the Institute-funded major research grant "Targeting Implicit Cognitions in Comprehensive Prevention Programming for Gambling, Alcohol and Cannabis Use (#87)." She also has several first-authored publications and has presented her research at numerous national and international conferences. Congratulations Gillian!

Russell, G. E. H., Sanders, J. L., & Williams, R. J. (2020). Implicit memory associations and video gaming. *Addictive Behaviors*, 108, 106444.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2020.106444>

### Abstract:

**Background and Objectives:** The aim of this study was to develop measures to assess implicit memory associations for video gaming and to examine the relationship between implicit memory associations, video gaming involvement, and problem video gaming.

**Methods:** A survey of online panelists from across Canada was conducted that included 166 problem video gamers who were recruited for participation in a larger study examining the relationship between gambling, video gaming, and collectible card play.



Memory associations were assessed using a 10-item measures of word associations and behaviour associations. Video gaming involvement was assessed via self-report of time and frequency of play, and problem video gaming was assessed using the Behavioral Addiction Measure for Video Gaming (BAM-VG).

**Results:** Significant Kendall tau-b correlations ranging from .297 to .405 were found between measures of memory associations and both level of video gaming involvement and problem video gaming.

**Conclusions:** There is a robust relationship between memory associations for video gaming with level of video gaming involvement and problem video gaming. The results suggest that implicit associations may have utility in the assessment of problem video gaming.

*This article content first appeared in the Fall 2020 issue of the [YGI Newsletter](#) and has been revised and re-used with permission.*



## Article Examines Gender Equity amongst AGRI Scholarship Recipients

Since the inception of the scholarship program in 2009, the Institute has awarded scholarships to more than fifty M.A./M.Sc. and Ph.D. graduate students undertaking gambling-related research at its affiliated universities. Dr. Carrie A. Leonard (U. of Lethbridge), a former scholarship recipient herself, and co-author Victoria Violo (Mount Royal University) took a closer look at the gender equality evidenced in the program in their in-press article "Gender equality in gambling student funding: A brief report," recently accepted for publication in [\*Critical Gambling Studies\*](#).

The study was undertaken to contribute to the discussion of gender equality in gambling research

and to provide preliminary information about up-and-coming gambling researchers. Leonard and Violo examined all Institute scholarships awarded from 2009 through 2019 to determine gender parity. Discipline diversity was detected among the 47 award recipients with 14 different academic disciplines represented. The results indicated that AGRI's annual graduate-level scholarships were distributed equally between females and males, across years (2009-2019), and at each graduate level. Females and males were also found to be equally likely to receive subsequent annual awards from the Institute.

## Research Grants 2020 -21

### Three Major Grants Awarded in 2020-21

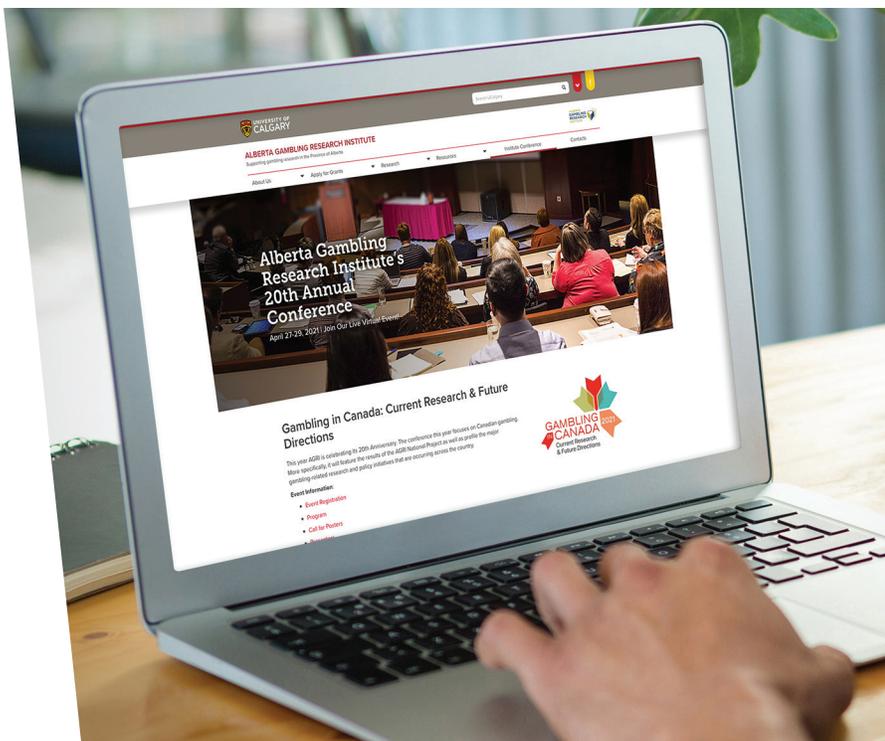
The Institute is pleased to announce that it has awarded the following three new major grants for the 2020-21 research cycle:

1. **Lottery Winnings and Financial Wellbeing (#89)** – Dr. Barry Scholnick (Alberta School of Business, University of Alberta).
2. **Giwii-nisidopanmin Odaminowin: Gambling and Videogames in the lives of Indigenous Youth in Northwestern Ontario (#90)** – Dr. Fiona Nicoll (Department of Political Science, University of Alberta).

3. **Gambling in Canada in the Aftermath of the Pandemic (#91)** – Dr. Carrie Leonard (Faculty of Health Sciences & Department of Psychology, University of Lethbridge).

Submitted grant applications are adjudicated by the Institute Board's Proposal Adjudication Committee (PAC) in consultation with external peer-reviewers. Information about applying for various research grant opportunities is available from the [Apply for Grants](#) page on the Institute website.

### AGRI Website Refreshed



Visitors to the Institute website will have noticed that it has been modernized and streamlined over the past few months. As part of the update, new graphical elements were added and outdated content removed though the organization structure of the site remains largely unchanged. The Institute web site can be accessed from the URL <http://abgamblinginstitute.ca> which automatically re-directs visitors to <https://research.ucalgary.ca/alberta-gambling-research-institute>.

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