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Preparing the 2005 National Conference on Problem Gambling conference transcripts for publication

Those who attended this conference may notice differences between what they heard presented and what we have published. These differences resulted from editing decisions that were sometimes difficult. In the interest of transparency, we present our readers with this description of the editing decisions that resulted in the current issue of the *JGI*.

Step 1: The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) contracted for staff to audiotape and then to transcribe the tapes.

Step 2: The editor of the *JGI* found gaps and portions marked [unclear] in the transcripts, so he asked each presenter to correct these problems.

Step 3: Once the *JGI* had complete transcripts, we edited them for readability by removing repetitions, awkward expressions, asides, and off-topic remarks. (Nonlinguists are always shocked to see an accurate transcript of even a semiformal speech event. The number of errors of grammar and style—ums and ahs, repeated conjunctions, repetitions, asides that go off topic, shifts in person and verb tense—is always shocking. Natural speech has no punctuation and that supplied by transcribers may not always be the best for readability. Reading such an unedited transcript is fascinating for linguists who study language production, but tedious and irritating to the nonlinguist.) We edited all transcripts with a view to balancing readability with being careful to preserve the message that each presenter wished to offer.

Step 4: The conference presenters agreed that the question, answer, and discussion periods were fascinating and yielded worthwhile insights into how this team of front-line researchers and clinicians saw the future of problem gambling diagnosis and treatment. But for an editor there was the problem that many of the audience members spoke indistinctly and, without their names or contact information, it was impossible to obtain their corrections. So with regret we

included only the discussions that involved the invited participants, for we were able to check back with them to fill in and correct their discussions.

Step 5: Our copy editor worked over each transcript looking for areas that needed improvement (poor grammar, spelling, poor sentence flow, and poor readability) and edited to improve readability. She made suggestions on how each presentation could be improved without changing the text's meaning. Then we asked each presenter if the changes were acceptable and respected what each wished to say.

Step 6: The final transcripts were prepared for publication in this Issue 15.

We hope that you find this issue of conference proceedings to be an interesting record of what the leading researchers in North America foresee in problem gambling research, treatment, and policy.

We welcome your comments.

Phil Lange, editor

Journal of Gambling Issues

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