



# **The Romance of Gambling in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel (Palgrave Studies in the Enlightenment, Romanticism and the Cultures of Print)**

*Jessica Richard*

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From high-stakes Faro to lottery insurance to petty wagers, even to the very instruments of the Financial Revolution, gambling permeated the daily lives of eighteenth-century Britons of all classes. Jessica Richard argues that the romance of gambling, its celebration of the chance incalculable event, the heroic achievement against all odds, the lucky break, is foundational to eighteenth-century British culture and as such a central concern for the period's novels. Analyzing works by Richardson, Brooke, Smollett, Henry and Sarah Fielding, Burney, Radcliffe, Edgeworth, and Austen, along with gambling ephemera such as playing cards and games manuals, Richard shows that novelists use gambling scenarios not to tame chance but to interrogate its role in generic form and in a transforming capital economy inspired by and dependent on gambling.

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