

Non-POM and Gambling

People have been playing games of chance and betting on the outcome of contests for thousands of years. Many people take great pleasure from gambling. For some, gambling serves as a diversion and a pastime which augments their pleasure in life. For others, gambling is a curse that draws them again and again to risk that which they can ill afford to lose. It is largely because of this latter group that many moralists condemn gambling as a sin and many legislatures have made gambling a crime.

But what would happen to gambling in a non-[POM](#) society? We know that with a physical object money (POM) the objects cannot be controlled and [organized crime](#) can use money to corrupt law enforcement because a POM is amoral. But in a non-POM economy, the money cannot be transferred from the loser to the winner of a bet. This makes gambling rather pointless for organized crime. There is no way the syndicate can take money from those who like to gamble. Thus the large, elaborate, flashy gambling casinos would be a thing of the past. Oh they might provide one or two as showcases somewhat like the Colonial Williamsburg recreational area and one might have to pay to get in and be given tokens with which to play the slot machines and other games of chance. But since one is paying money to get in and one cannot win non-POM money there, just those tokens which are not money, the thrill will be lacking for the addicted gambler.

So let's assume that there are those (and I am sure there are) who would want to gamble as if they were using a POM. Several of these individuals get together and play poker using chips to which they assign dollar amounts in the non-POM money. They play for a time and, having finished their game, the loser(s) owe the winner(s) money. This is a debt of honor since there is no contract and no way for the losers to transfer their money to the winners so they must work out some other means. Perhaps the losers write IOUs to give to the winners and those IOUs promise to accompany the winner to some place where money can be spent and to buy object(s) not to exceed the amount of the debt and to transfer, as a gift, ownership of the object(s) to the winner. In this fashion, one can actually risk one's money in a game of chance or skill (like chess). One can also reap a reward from winning in such a game, just as if one had acquired actual money instead of an unenforceable IOU. Thus, though perhaps not as much fun as losing the rent money, one could simulate gambling with a POM.

But let's examine the differences in the POM gambling experience and the non-POM. For the POM gambler, there is a real risk of injury or death if gambling with organized crime. Also, since with a POM money is required

to acquire the necessities of life, one may be gambling with the health and well being of one's family and dependents. In a non-POM economy, one can only lose what one already has earned. There is no risk from organized crime though one can't always depend on one's gambling buddies to take quietly one's "[welching](#)" on a bet. Also, since one receives necessities without having to pay for them in a non-POM economy, one's family will not suffer if one loses all one's money. They will still have housing, food, clothing, and medical care regardless of how much money remains in the gambler's account.

Also, with a POM one can borrow money and gamble that away. In a non-POM economy there is no [debt](#) and no [credit](#). One cannot borrow money. Of course, one can, perhaps, persuade one's gambling buddies that one will earn money later and will use that money to pay off their gambling IOUs. But, again, though that hurts one's reputation it doesn't hurt anything else.

Therefore, in the non-POM society, one can gamble with minimal risk to one's self or to others. The potential harm of gambling will have been eliminated and most of the fun will remain. Of course, the police would not waste their time attempting to enforce any laws that happen to be on the books about gambling.