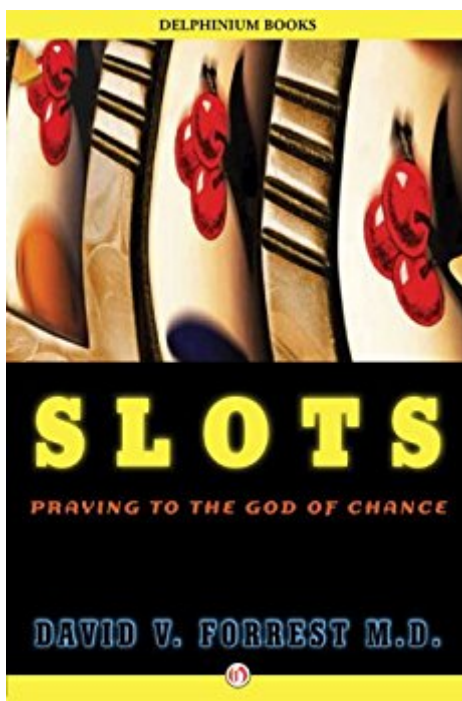


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# Slots: Praying To The God Of Chance



## Synopsis

This astonishing book reveals that there's a lot more to playing slot machines than one of America's fastest growing forms of entertainment than good fun, deep relaxation and the dream of a multi-million-dollar jackpot. Slots tells how the machines work, how the random numbers that govern them are generated, and how the casinos make their profit . . . slowly but surely . . . as they keep only a dime of every dollar invested. It also offers strategies of slot play, and suggests alternate activities to distract us when casinos become harmfully habitual. But ultimately, as Dr. Forrest writes, to spend one's time feeding money to the machines is to participate in, well . . . a form of prayer. And the gaming industry seems very much aware of it, as players annually plunge more than \$365-billion into slots (of which casinos keep about \$30-billion); and as casinos 70 to 85 percent of whose profits are earned by slot machines have spread to more than a dozen states and even into a number of racetracks (where they're called racinos). What this book describes with both humor and a sense of awe is the way slots emporia have steadily been transformed from underground grottos to soaring cathedral-like structures where congregants sit and commune all to the end of worshipping the god of chance.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was lured to SLOTS in much the same way that habitual slot players are drawn to a particular slot machine: by the promise of possible fortune. A few times a year I play slot machines and when I first heard about the book, I decided to read it based upon this one statement in the promotional literature, "It also offers strategies of slot play." I figured that if I could get a few tips of how to play a slot machine better, then that would be great. Unfortunately, SLOTS doesn't really offer many strategies of slot play. The few that it does, such as don't drink alcohol while playing, are common sense. SLOTS is divided into two sections: "The Why of Slot Machines" and "Rethinking Your Slot Play." The first section is a thorough examination of the author's main thesis that slot playing has become a new religion for many people (although it is an unconscious choice by most). The author goes into great detail describing casinos around the world and how they resemble temples and churches. In some cases, casinos have been designed around the architecture of old cathedrals. This section also examines how a slot machine actually works as well as providing a brief history of slot play. The second section, offers a few tips about how to play slot machines. However, it's mostly a lecture on why people should play slots, essays on the mental and psychological disorders that can affect, suggestions on what people should do instead of playing slot machines, an examination of the different people who play slot machines, and predictions on the future of slot play. I was disappointed by SLOTS. The book is a quick read, but other than a few trivial tidbits, I really didn't learn anything from it and found it dull and dry.

has categorized Slots: Praying to the God of Chance as a book about psychology, puzzles and games, and social sciences. They could just as easily have tagged it philosophy, essays, social history, or gambling studies. It may be difficult to categorize, but it's very easy to read and get caught up in. David Forrest, a psychiatrist, has spent a lot of time over the years playing slots, and more time observing other people playing slots, and talking to people about slots. He discusses the history of slot machines, how they work, the math of slot machines, the variety of slot machines, how they are regulated and operated, and what their place in today's casinos is. If you find any of these slot topics uninteresting, before you know it, Forrest is off on another slot-related tangent. Forrest manages to pack a lot of material into this short book. His main idea is that playing slots is, for many people, a form of prayer. The meditative rhythm of playing is in direct contrast to most games of chance in which players compete and make decisions on which cards to play or which teams to bet on. He finds slot players non-competitive - they even celebrate other peoples' wins. And there are no strategies in slots, you just watch the wheels go around and eventually maybe they'll line up in a winning combination. From this intriguing, but unconvincing argument (I

find it hard to believe that many people find playing slots a zen-like experience - the greed factor is hard to overlook), Forrest outlines the addictive nature of slot play and explains how to tell if you are at risk, and how to avoid becoming addicted (this involves examining what it is about slot play you find irresistible and replacing slots with an appropriate substitute such as bird watching or knitting).

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