

Krasee Girls, inspired by a six-year-old, details the activities of an increasing number of adults playing video machines called "eight-liners". Players of every sex, gender, ethnic and economical background were not experiencing the appearance of "Lady Luck"!

Krasee girls!

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Krasee Girls

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ISBN-13 978-1-60145-259-7

ISBN-10 1-60145-259-4

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2007

Krasee Girls

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CHAPTER 1: EIGHT-LINER MACHINE “KRASE”

The start-up of game rooms filled with eight-liner machines for adult entertainment was a spin-off from legalized casinos. Owners of the eight-liner machines were required to affix information regarding expiration dates for permits and copyright information on every machine.

Information was displayed on the front of each machine and viewed by municipal employees who checked for validation of the permits. Copyright information registered dates of origin as early as the nineteen eighties. Eight-liner machines were entertainment for adults who played games for chances.

Eight-liner machines were designed almost identical to slot machines in casinos. One distinct difference, cash was not paid for credits. The public's awareness was not widespread. Knowledge was limited regarding the existence of eight-liner machines. Minimal inserts of quarters were required to begin play. Play would not start until the total of one dollar was inserted. The colorful display of multiple games on the machines kept the attention of players for hours.

This was exactly what the owners of the machines wanted. The longer a player stayed, the more a player spent. Revenue was mounting for the owners of the

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machines. After a review of the amount inserted, the owners plugged the coin slots on the machines and only bills were inserted. The change paid off and store clerks were available to exchange larger bills for smaller ones.

The placement of eight-liner machines in cities and neighborhoods was a new venture. The venture was a success and profitable to the owners. The margin of profit was high. Players received the lower percentage of pay. The machines were designed to lure adults to a social setting where small talk and multiple choices of games were the focus. The machines were designed to create an urge to “win” with marginal inserts of cash. Signs were posted for all to read about the risk of playing for fun.

Only adults were permitted to take a seat and play among their peers. There were adults standing and waiting to take the next available seat at the machines. Since “no cash” was paid, what was the reason so many sat or waited to play the eight-liner machines? What was the draw for adults to sit hours on end, feed hard earned cash into eight-liner machines with no cash return?

Many hardworking people traveled to game rooms and other places where the machines were available. Word spread rapidly about how much fun they were. The games on the machines kept players occupied and everyone wanted to win a prize. The bright lights on the screens were

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exciting. The noise from the bells and whistles indicated mounting credits on the machines. Small investment of pennies in one-dollar and higher increments quickly added up. The numbers of video addicts were increasing at an alarming rate.

Time took a ride on a jumbo jet and before a player realized, the list of things to do took a trip to the hip pocket or a zipped compartment in a handbag. The action of playing a game for the exchange of money was an act of gambling. In most cities that did not legalize gambling, the exchange of cash payments for credits on an eight-liner machine was illegal.

The intent of most was to be entertained, exchange a winning ticket of credits for gift cards or store items. The excitement most experienced was the sharing of success stories about small windfalls from playing the eight-liner machines. Game rooms were filled with players who knew one another. Players met as a group. Some met for the first time and were no longer strangers. Everyone respected each other and agreed to the rule of first to the machine, first to play.

Owners of game rooms were required to monitor the activity and provide a safe environment for all players. Adults with children were not allowed to enter. The

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convenience, or mom and pop stores did not refuse entry to adults with children.

Adults were busy shopping and the children were browsing for treats. They heard the rings from the machines and went to find out what was going on. Children were ushered away from the machines as they listened to sounds from bells and whistles. They saw colorful lights flashing, “You win”!

Adults sat with eyes affixed on the screen of the machines with the same excitement as the children who were swiftly sent away. The one-cent, five-cent, ten-cent, and quarter postings on the machines advertised the nominal investment for a chance for a jackpot.

The postings were misleading to those who tried to win from minimal inserts of pennies, nickels and dimes. Much more was required before a jackpot was won. The idea was to increase the player’s expectation of winning a jackpot from small amounts inserted into the machines.

The thrill of getting more from less was the invitation to an addiction to the eight-liner machines. The inventor knew the outcome would produce profits to the eight-liner industry and create a gaming industry with constant increase in numbers of players. The eight-liner industry could not compete with the casino owners; but would experience a high level of success from their businesses.

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The rule for exchange of tickets was different from a legal casino.

Tickets from eight-liner machines were taken to a store clerk or game room attendant and gift cards of equal value were exchanged for credits. Items were selected from special stock at stores; game room attendants exchanged gifts for winning tickets. Everyone wanted something in return as they sat to play.

Who would have imagined the child-like excitement from adults when playing eight-liner machines? The “craze” sparked new openings of adult game rooms in neighborhoods in many cities. Game rooms were huge spaces filled with eight-liner machines and amenities of gifts, food and drinks. Game rooms were empty only when closed and filled when opened to capacity with players.

Happy hour with what many called the “happy hooker” machines was at a different location. Players met after work to play and socialize. The owners were the happiest. The reason for the success of the game rooms was the continuous flow of new players. The upper, middle, and lower classes mixed well. Senior citizens outnumbered all other age groups. Females outnumbered males on any given day. The representation of males slowly increased. Many game rooms provided a smoking and non-smoking

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area. Music was played loudly to sound out the constant ringing of cellular phones.

Noise from phones and machines blended. There was less time on cellular phones because no one was able to hear what was being said. An attendant was available at game rooms to verify credits on the machines, exchange bills, and provide food to those who wanted.

Coffee, soda, food and water were provided for the convenience of players. Players only left the stools for a trip to the food table or the restroom.

Truck stops provided lounges for drivers of long distances and were among the first to introduce to the public, eight-liner machines. The truck stops had video-poker machines only. Initially, truck stop owners were not allowed to stock machines with multiple games on them. Most truck stops were just minutes off major freeways. The truck drivers played the video machines to relax before taking a nap, or while refueling their trucks to continue their journeys.

They played before dinner while trucks were being repaired or maintained. The eight-liner machines were moneymakers and were put in service stations, bars, bowling alleys and pool halls. The machines were put in rented spaces in strip shopping centers. New adult game rooms were opening frequently.

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Word spread and a cheerful crowd gathered for the startup of activity to make the owners proud. A player sat and chatted with watchful eyes traveling up, down, side-to-side to view the activity on the machines around them. The eight-liner machines were like magnets and drew onlookers from all directions.

The education and occupation of the players was of no interest to anyone. The backgrounds or hopes for the future were not open for discussion. The main focus was the opportunity for a chance to be the next one in the winning circle.

The defeated could not hide the agony of their disappointment. They continued to put money into the slots and wished for a turn to experience the “thrill of victory”. When the poll was taken and the votes were counted, the activity did not add up to be “fun”.

What was the driving force behind the urge to play for those who could afford the luxury of throwing away hard earned money? Many agreed the logic was non-existent for the connection to the “crazy-ness”.

There were few winners; yet, the numbers of players was always increasing. The locations of game rooms in neighborhoods were convenient for many. Those without vehicles, walked to the game rooms. The increase in the

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number of players was more noticeable at the beginning of each month.

Most were on fixed incomes. The activity was very engaging; especially when luck was experienced by a player; and gave back enough credits to claim a small windfall. When one witnessed the windfall of another; bets were raised and the stay was longer than planned. Money was spent that was earmarked for something else.

There was no guarantee of success for anyone. There were only a few lucky ones to play on a machine that gave credits. Each machine had a set time to pay out a certain number of credits and there were no indications of which one would.

Friends and associates helped each other by informing which machine the credit slips were taken from. The “regular” players observed other players and did not rush to be seated when a machine became available. They waited until the machine had been played over and over again. They left the store to return to play another time.

They were often winners of high credit payouts. The “play at your own risk” and “no cash” signs were safeguards for owners and prevented further discussions. The eight-liner “craze” was growing and no one advertised for players. The locations of new game rooms were the talk

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among friends and acquaintances in neighborhoods around the city.

“Free” offerings of food, drinks, and a five dollar match helped to gain the attention of new players. The activity led to frequent social gatherings at game rooms. Female groups blended with male groups for a mixture of eager fortune hunters. Many had financial problems and any reduction in finances would result in bigger problems.

Frequent participation of play on eight-liner machines caused self-imposed addictions unknown to new players. Losses from paychecks and other financial resources was not a liability for owners of the machines. The addictions resulting from strong urges to play were not a liability for owners.

Game rooms were filled with players who would not admit having an addiction. Anyone who entered a game room was a target. There was no fee for registration of fingerprints on the play or cash out buttons. All were welcome and asked to bring a guest with them when they returned. There were no background checks. No one was concerned about an addiction to the “happy hooker” machines.

There was non-stop activity by players on the machines. Most game rooms remained open very late. A small number remained opened twenty-four hours, seven

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days a week. The larger game rooms were located in strip shopping centers with ample space for the machines and ample parking for cars of players.

Convenience stores and mom and pop stores provided fewer machines because of limited space. New players were always welcomed, and treated very friendly. There were not many complaints from players. When a complaint arose, the attendants quickly appeased the complainer by adding credits on the machine.

Attendants knew where the money was going and the owners would get it back after closing. Local authorities had the responsibility to investigate any complaints against owners with permits for eight liner machines. Calls were received from residents in the area concerning too much traffic in the neighborhood. Most calls were ignored from disgruntled players.

Disgruntled players were the ones who lost and could not afford to. When a player became boisterous in a game room, a warning was given. When the behavior did not cease, the player was asked to leave the premise. Signs above the machines alerted all to the risk involved in playing. They were not to be overlooked.

Any complaints by players because of lost wages would not stand in court against owners of game rooms. The warning signs posted; “play at your risk” were a strong

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defense. There were many perks and complimentary gestures on the part of the owners to keep a certain number of players around.

The clerk at “the place” was given permission by the owner to purchase food from restaurants that delivered. Players enjoyed a variety of dishes and after eating, stayed longer to play. The “regular” or “long-term” player was the recipients of the owners’ friendly perks. “Regulars” met frequently and stayed a long time to play. They arrived at the game rooms early and stayed late. The “short-term” players showed up infrequently and were offered free drinks only. The “regular” players developed a bond among each other.

There was a level of calm from players who bonded. They remained calm after losing and stayed to cheer for others who had better luck. The “regular” players were paid cash equal to the amount of credits on their tickets.

A “regular” player was a trustee and helped the owners identify players to pay. The trustees were given extra credits and loans when needed to play. Other players scrambled to get more cash to return for another chance to win. There was much kidding among players and labels of “video addicts” were playfully exchanged. Everyone had a different reason for playing the eight-liner machines.

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They humorously reminded each other of the toll-free number for gambling problems. They chose to call their activity “fun”. They insisted they were mature, responsible individuals who set limits for spending and played only for the amusement of the games.

Problems began when adults did not pay attention to the amount of time or money required for the elusive jackpots. The outcome was clearly disappointing and resulted in many excuses for becoming “video addicts”!

The uncontrollable urge to play until a jackpot was won was very costly. There was an obsession with the idea of being a jackpot winner. There was always going to be only one more try. One more totaled two and more until zero was the balance of finances. Frustration from defeat and losses triggered physical and mental stress.

It made “no-cents” and the idea of “winning something for nothing” was senseless! Game rooms were replicas of mini casinos. Slot machines in cities like Las Vegas where gambling was legal were blamed for “lost wages”. Eight-liner machines caused losses also.

Happy, Miss C, Shug, Granny, and Queen, Mallissa’s “krasee girl-friends”, met regularly to play the eight-liner machines. They too were “video addicts”. They were caught up in the “craze”. The eight-liner “craze” was “cents-less” activity. It did not matter if luck fell on one

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most of the time. An addition to the “craze” was going to become a problem and an addiction would follow.

The “Krasee girls” began separating from “the place” to participate in other activities that led to more rewarding experiences. It was certainly a good thing. Their experiences as “Krasee girls” were shared to enlighten and help prevent others from participation in self-imposed addicting activities.

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