

~~I don't want~~

I'd like to tell you a story about gambling. Now
~~I don't want to damage your spirits, but today is the~~
~~Jewish Sabbath and the Sabbath and gambling~~
~~don't go together, but I~~ **GAMBLING** ~~think they're~~ ~~in this case~~

One fact you may not know about me is that I come from a long line of inveterate gamblers. This may be a bit hard to credit, especially since my taste in cards runs to double solitaire and fish. Nevertheless, my grandfather was addicted to gambling, as was his father before him.

When I was little, and when something difficult had happened in our family, I often heard this expression: "We may have lost the revolution, but we can still win America." (It was usually said with a strong Yiddish inflection, which I will not even try to imitate). Now in a literal sense, I had no idea what this meant: What revolution? How can you win a whole country? But on another level, even as a small child, I knew exactly what it meant: You can sustain losses in life, sometimes unimaginable losses, and still triumph. You just had to take the risk.

One day, when I was a college student, I asked my father what this family expression meant. He told me the following story, which ~~on~~ ^{is} ~~one level may be~~ apocryphal, but ~~on another level~~ I am sure is completely true. ^{probably} ^{in the most important sense}

The kind of
not a gambler who
only bet on
dice, but on
which would reach the
bottom of the
wind up wine
first

My great-grandfather, Yankel Nadezdawiecz, lived in a small town in eastern Romania, near the Russian border. As I have mentioned, he was a great gambler. One night he was engaged in a particularly fierce card game. He had lost the week's salary, and next week's as well. He had gambled away his egg-laying chickens, his winter coat, even his wife's Sabbath candlesticks. Despite this bad streak, my great-grandfather was still feeling lucky, but he had nothing left to wager.

Suddenly, the evening's high roller gave my great-grandfather a strange look. "Yankel," he said, "I tell you what. One more hand. You win, your debts are forgiven, and you take home 25 dinars to boot. I win," and here there was a long pause, "and you agree to lead the revolution."

You see, the year was 1907, the year of a great peasant uprising against the autocratic and repressive regime of King Carol I. Unfortunately, despite his feeling lucky, as is often the case with gamblers, my great-grandfather lost the hand, and indeed he did become one of the organizers of the Romanian rebellion of 1907. Also unfortunately for him, and for most Romanians, his bad luck continued unabated. The king's army crushed the rebels, at the cost of more than 10,000 peasant lives.

It was at this point that my great-grandfather's bad luck finally changed. Although the uprising had failed, he managed to escape to America with his wife and six year old son, my grandfather David. Yankel Nadezdawiecz loved America with the passion of the immigrant. In fact, he renamed himself Yankee Freedman, to show

both his desire to be a true American, a Yankee, and to show his respect for the privilege of being able to live, for the first time in his life, as a truly free man. He became an atheist and a socialist, but remained a dedicated gambler; and in fact, at the age of 62, died of a heart attack in the middle of a game of ~~poker~~. Rumor has it that he was winning.

pinocchio

Yankee Freedman lost the revolution, but he won America. I thought of this coming up here, to this retreat, and I thought about all we as a department have lost and won this past year. Some of our losses truly have been profound, almost unimaginable. But I would like to think that our winnings have been great as well. We've taken some risks, we've gambled on ourselves, and I believe on the whole we've come out winners. *I'd like to think that we are well on our way to winning America, and that our time here this weekend, learning to better work together, honestly confronting our problems and searching out solutions, will bring us one step closer toward this 3w goal.

Starting with the loss of our chair Dr. Prishin and perhaps ending with the death of Dean Fujii.

The faculty has pulled together, sometimes making great sacrifices to do so, especially. We have a great group of residents, who have also stepped up to the plate every time we've asked them. We ~~even~~^{even} have our beautiful new family health center. thanks to Dr. Morohashi's ^{bravery} tenacious efforts. & Dr. Dink's

Dr. Larsen has ~~helped~~ hold together our clinical enterprise & Dr. Douglas has fought for our department on the search committee.