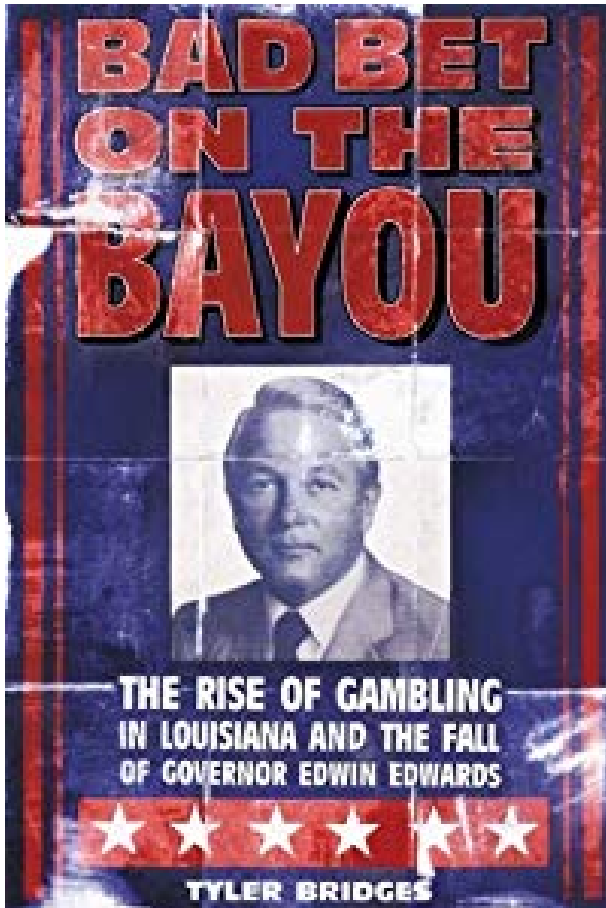


Bad Bet on the Bayou: The Rise and Fall of Gambling in Louisiana and the Fate of Governor Edwin Edwards



ISBN13:	9780374528546
Genre:	History
Published:	May 15th 2002 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux
Pages:	432
Language	English
ISBN10:	0374528543
Author:	Tyler Bridges
Goodreads Rating:	3.75

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Louisiana is our most exotic state. It is religious and roguish, a place populated by Cajuns, Creoles, Rednecks, and Bible-thumpers. It is a state that loves good food, good music, and good times. Laissez les bons temps rouler -- let the good times roll -- is the unofficial motto. Louisiana is also excessively corrupt. In the 1990s, it plunged headlong into legalized gambling, authorizing more games of chance than any other state.

Leading the charge was Governor Edwin Edwards, who for years had flaunted his fondness for cold cash and high-stakes gambling, and who had used his razor-sharp mind and catlike reflexes to stay one step ahead of the law. Gambling, Edwin Edwards, and Louisiana's political culture would prove to be a combustible mix. Bad Bet on the Bayou tells the story of what happened when the most corrupt industry came to our most corrupt state. It is a sweeping morality tale about commerce, politics, and what happens when the law catches up to our most basic human desires and frailties.