



Casino Chronicle: How I Recovered from Injurious Employment Practices---So Can You!

Pascale Batioufaye

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Tracing a former casino worker's struggles, Casino Chronicle includes advice for others who were taken advantage of by their employers, too.

Pascale Batioufaye's memoir *Casino Chronicle* concerns the perils and pitfalls of working in the gaming industry.

Batioufaye worked for an unnamed casino, here called Knossos to make room for candor. He served as its guest services representative during the late 1990s and early 2000s, and his exposé of the casino calls it "a gambling den, engaged in unsavory practices." Claims that the casino stole his ideas to make itself more profitable arise, as do claims of persecution and dismissal. Primary documents, including emails and employee suggestion program forms, are included to support these claims. Because of his experiences with Knossos, Batioufaye struggled with his mental health; as its employee, he was required to seek counseling, a demand he considered retaliatory.

Batioufaye's ideas for improving the casino organize the text, beginning with his employee suggestion program presentation regarding its marketing materials and moving into his thoughts about expanding the casino's food options. He also shared a suggestion for building, structuring, and naming a new casino tower. These aspirational suggestions are examined against their outcomes, including the fact that Batioufaye only received minor compensation when his ideas were put into practice. Attractive word choices and metaphors—talking to Knossos's bosses involved "veneered vanities," and Batioufaye falls "under the spell of a casino"—transform Batioufaye's story of work-related issues into a mythic quest for recognition.

Advice for others dealing with job-related stress is included within the narrative, all derived from Batioufaye's own struggles. It includes both common sense suggestions and surprising tips, including to use television to discover personal interests and to "perform virtuous acts whenever you can." Methods that Batioufaye found personally useful, including vigorous exercise and yoga, are championed for delivering a sense of calm. Such internal advice lays the groundwork for the book's closing chapters, which include a varied collection of homespun wisdom.

Cultural arguments also arise, including that the gaming industry is "inextricably linked to the centuries-long struggles of this country's native populations," with some controversial advice to Native Americans included, such as that tribes increase their numbers and only marry internally; the book promotes 100% Native bloodlines. Such topics represent an marked narrative shift. Because the book endeavors to cover so much ground in a short space, its sense of focus is often lost.

Tracing a former casino worker's transformation from a naïve employee to a man with improved self-understanding, *Casino Chronicle* includes advice for others who were taken advantage of by their employers.

JEREMIAH ROOD (July 31, 2020)

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