The Power of Play in Higher Education

"Academics are a justifiably sceptical lot and love to privilege logical and analytical thinking. To get us out of our routinized ways of creating meaning, assigning merit and judging worth we need to draw senses and powers other than purely rational cognition. Play galvanizes creativity, inspires action and triggers different ways of building knowledge. It's also an insurrectionary force that challenges bureaucratized and siloed thinking and practice. In this visionary book packed with wonderful vignettes, exercises, techniques and suggestions you will find ways to rethink and broaden your teaching and academic practice. Product warning: this book changes lives."

—Professor Stephen Brookfield, *University of St Thomas, USA*

"The importance of play as an ecology for learning and discovery is often overlooked in tertiary education, so these author/editors are to be congratulated for bringing together such a diverse and valuable set of pedagogical narratives about how play is being used to encourage learning and creativity in higher education. This is a 'must read' book for tertiary educators who are interested in and who care about the creative development of learners and themselves."

—Professor Norman Jackson, *University of Surrey, UK*

"This book is a unique and timely contribution to the field of play and learning in Higher Education. It presents voices from practitioners across the sector demonstrating the extensive scope and scale of engagement with playful forms of learning. Through a series of in-depth case studies and vignettes of playful practice, this book inspires and convinces. It is packed full of examples and ideas, bringing together theory with experiences from the field. A must for creative educators everywhere!"

—Professor Nicola Whitton, *Durham University, UK*

"Learning through play is a powerful methodology: this invaluable guide illuminates through an excellent range of UK and North-American contributions how ludic approaches are used to good effect in higher education. This highly practical and evidence-informed volume illustrates how creativity can be boosted, fostering student engagement, and generating enthusiasm for learning."

—Professor Phil Race, *Edge Hill University, UK*; Professor Sally Brown, *Leeds Beckett University, UK*

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The Power of Play in Higher Education

Creativity in Tertiary Learning

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This book is dedicated to Glyn and Adam and to all those who have stepped out along the play path

Foreword

A System Error

For some while now there's been an odd assumption about formal education. A curious belief has taken root in the heads of policy-makers and those working in schools and universities that higher levels of study should be a deadpan business with little time for fun. Apparently as you grow up, it's important to smile only occasionally and laugh a lot less than when you were younger. A stock rejoinder in any school classroom in response to behaviour which is seen as undesirable is to 'get on with your work'. Not 'get on with your learning'. Definitely not 'get on with your play'. For many children, education can all too easily be a journey of increasing seriousness from the exuberance of the playground to the silence of the examination hall. At university, it is all too easy for a learner's spirit of enquiry, playful experimentation and curiosity to be stifled by a misplaced perception that 'student engagement' and 'student satisfaction' will only be achieved if courses are delivered in certain unplayful ways.

In *Descartes Error* (2005), Antonio Damasio famously placed René Descartes in the dock for separating mind from body back in the

sixteenth century. With the benefit of modern neuroscience, we now know that emotion, reason and the human brain are all intimately linked and that the philosophical assertions made by Descartes and others simply do not wash. Yet education still bears the mark of viewpoints like this in its separation between academic and practical learning, the former being of higher status.

Something similar has happened with the way play has been separated out from education, although this is not down to any one individual's influence. Rather, it has been a gradual cultural evolution towards a more serious version of learning. In early years, education play is virtually synonymous with learning. But, as pupils become older, play is increasingly removed from the experience of school. And, once at university, play can all too often be seen as unserious suggesting a lack of quality. Yet for some while now the learning sciences (Harrington 1990; Csikszentmihalyi 1999; Fullan and Langworthy 2013; Lucas and Spencer 2017) are increasingly showing us the importance of creative exploration, playful imagining and the kinds of perspective taking which play promotes throughout education.

Learning in the Not-So-Wild

Outside of school and university, life is also becoming less playful. Once upon a time, we used to run wild, returning to our homes only to be fed by our parents before heading back out again for second helpings of wildness and fun. Or at least this is the dream of the past that many of us still hold dear.

Sadly our memories on this occasion hold true. Today's young people do indeed have less freedom to play, more tests to complete, a lot of homework (that word 'work' again) and, if they enter higher education, a growing seriousness of intent as the amount of their financial investment becomes apparent. Such a serious view is reinforced by many institutions in their perception that quality is to be judged by the earnestness with which every waking student moment is filled with useful assignments.

Life outside school and university, like formal education itself, is tamer and much less free. It has never been more important for those students who make it to university to experience open-ended exploration and deep learning which is not immediately attached to some kind of measurement in order to keep a more balanced view of education and ultimately lifelong learning alive.

The Power of Play in Education

This fascinating collection shows us why higher education can be playful today. Each of the sketches and contributions holds out the hope that teaching and learning in higher education can be both excellent and playful, purposeful and creative, rigorous and surprising. Contributors explore playful spaces, playful methods, playful new roles and seriously playful games. Author after author challenges us all to relish the child in us and to use childish thinking to good effect at university. The thinking is by turns exploratory, curious, synthesising, compelling, disturbing, reassuring and always motivational. As I read it, I am reminded that our chronological age is much less important than our mental one. For, as George Bernard Shaw put it, 'We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing'.

So dive into this wonderful reservoir of ideas. Drink deeply. Remind yourself how important it is to keep a more expansive view of education alive and how many creative ways there are in which you can do this.

Winchester, England   Bill Lucas

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Lucas, B., & Spencer, E. (2017). *Teaching Creative Thinking: Developing Learners Who Generate Ideas and Can Think Critically.* Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing.

Professor Bill Lucas is Director of the Centre for Real-World Learning at the University of Winchester. His model of creative thinking, developed with colleagues at Winchester, was published by the OECD in 2013 to critical acclaim. It has led to a fourteen-country study by the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation into the development of creativity in schools and his appointment as the co-chair of the PISA 2021 test of creative thinking. Bill holds many external appointments including membership of LEGO® Foundation's advisory group and international adviser to Australia's Mitchell Institute. The author of more than forty books, Bill recently collaborated with Guy Claxton in *Educating Ruby: What Our Children Really Need to Learn*, to ask educators to put creativity and play at the heart of the school system.

Acknowledgements

Contents

Notes on Contributors

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Dr. Tine Bech is a professional artist and researcher working at the intersection of art, technology and play. Bech's practice presents an aesthetic in which sculpture merges with the digital language of technology to create stunning large-scale public artworks, interactive spaces, participatory events and games. Play is the call to action within our emergent interactive environment. Ultimately, her practice aims to provoke curiosity and connect people with their immediate environment and with each other.

Sharon Boyd (@sboydie) is a Lecturer in Distance Student Learning at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. She is Director of the

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Professor Christopher (Chris) Budd, O.B.E. is a British mathematician known especially for his contribution to nonlinear differential equations and their applications in industry. He is currently Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of Bath, and Professor of Geometry at Gresham College.

Tom Burns is co-author of *Teaching, Learning and Study Skills: A Guide for Tutors* and *Essential Study Skills: The Complete Guide to Success at University* (4th edn.). Always interested in theatre and the arts, Tom has set up adventure playgrounds, community events and festivals; produced the first and only International Dario Fo Festival while still a student at Essex University; and taken Godber's 'Bouncers' to Crete dance venues.

Tom is a Senior Lecturer and University Teaching Fellow in the Centre for Professional and Educational Development at LondonMet, with a special focus on praxes that ignite student curiosity, harness creativity and develop power and voice.

Richard Cheetham, M.B.E. has a reputation at national and international level in coach education and development with his work ranging from rugby union to triathlon and professional cycling with the UCI. His research, publications and conference presentations have focussed on developing a more holistic approach to coaching as well as encouraging creativity and innovation in practice session design. The important role of play in sport at all levels of performance and across all ages has been a specific area of research with his work contributing to a regional primary education physical literacy initiative, UK Coaching, Rugby Canada and the University of Winchester Play and Creativity festival.

Dr. Helen Clarke is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Winchester, UK, where she teaches on Initial Teacher Education programmes. She is a Senior Fellow of Learning and Teaching at the University and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She has particular expertise in science education in the early years and primary phases. Committed to celebrating the energy and enthusiasm that children, students and teachers bring to their learning, she has researched children's early exploration and enquiry, rights respecting education, sustainability, environmental education and teacher development, both in the UK and overseas. She is currently working with a colleague to explore innovative teaching and learning ideas that connect children to environments through place attention and responsiveness (@Attention2place).

Dr. Andrew Clements is Lecturer in Organisational Psychology at the University of Bedfordshire. He is an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. His research interests include work commitment, employability and student engagement.

Nancy Davies is a Learning Technologist (University of Leeds, Institute of Medical Education). Nancy develops technological solutions to enrich medical education with a particular focus on supporting students to become reflective practitioners.

Dr. Tracy Dix is a Learning Development Adviser at the University of Leicester, working with academics to develop creative and inclusive teaching practices and integrated support for students' academic literacies. She developed the Harvard Referencing Game while part of the Teaching and Learning team at the University of Warwick Library.

Dr. Sarah Dyer is an Associate Professor of Human Geography at the University of Exeter in the UK. Sarah is the director of the University's Education Incubator, an initiative for developing and spreading innovative and effective educational practice. She teaches across the geography undergraduate programme and is B.A. programme director in the department. Sarah is also module convenor for the University's postgraduate academic practice module 'Creating Effective Learning in Higher Education'.

Dr. Rebecca Fisher was the Academic Projects Manager at the Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning at the University of Warwick and is one part of The Dark Would team, along with Amy Clarke, Philip Gaydon and Naomi de la Tour (warwick.ac.uk/thedarkwould). Along with the other Dark Would-ers, she is an author of *Playfulness in Higher Education: A Playbox* (warwick.ac.uk/playbox). Her work on The Dark Would reflects her scholarly and feminist commitment to testing and dismantling unhelpful binaries within and beyond the classroom: The Dark Would disrupts accepted hierarchies of power by bringing together teachers, students and administrators to spark innovation out of challenge, friction and transgression. She is currently the Departmental Administrator for Research, Finance and Operations in Sociology at the University of Warwick.

Dr. Carey Fleiner is Senior Lecturer in Classical and Early Medieval History and Programme Leader in Classical Studies at the University of Winchester. Recent publications include '*Optima Mater*: Power, Influence, and the Maternal Bonds Between Agrippina the Younger (AD 15–59) and Nero, Emperor of Rome (AD 54–68)' in *Royal Mothers and Their Ruling Children: Wielding Political Authority from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era, Vol. 1*, ed. Ellie Woodacre and Carey Fleiner (Palgrave, 2015): 149–170; *The Kinks: A Thoroughly English Phenomenon* (Rowman, 2017); 'Doctor, Go Roman: Emperor Nero, and Historical Comedy in *Doctor Who*, 'The Romans' (1965)' in *Doctor Who and History: Critical Essays on Imagining the Past*, Carey Fleiner and Dene October, eds. (McFarland, 2017). She lives on the south coast of England.

Philip Gaydon was a sessional teacher and funding recipient at Warwick's Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning. During his time with IATL, he constituted one-quarter of The Dark Would team and his research focused on virtue epistemology in children's literature and education. He contributed to the creation of the online resource *Playfulness in Higher Education: A Playbox* (warwick.ac.uk/playbox) and the attempt to instil a sense of playfulness in HE teachers and classrooms underpins his *The Warwick Handbook of Innovative Teaching*. He is now a teacher of philosophy at St Paul's School in London.

Dr. Natalia Gerodetti is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology and a Senior HEA Fellow. Her research has been in the wider area of gender and sexuality as well as on food and identity. She has a particular interest in developing and engaging students with games-based learning, and together with Dr. Darren Nixon, she has been involved in ongoing staff–student games design groups that address a variety of curriculum and curriculum supporting activities. The collaborative games developed as part of the Leeds Games Group are two research methods games and a transition game for first-year students.

Tim Harrison was a secondary school teacher of chemistry for 25 years, head of chemistry, deputy head of science and Science College Director before joining the University of Bristol to become its first School Teacher Fellow. He is now Director of Outreach for the Bristol ChemLabS Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Science Communicator in residence. He has won national and international awards for his contributions to science education but is most well known for his legendary talks to schools and the general public, aided by awe-inspiring demonstration experiments, which he has given on five continents.

Dr. Maxwell Hartt is a Lecturer in Spatial Planning in the School of Geography and Planning at Cardiff University. In addition to his research on game-based learning, Maxwell studies shrinking cities, economic decline, ageing and age-friendly policy. Maxwell was a SSHRC postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Toronto, a Fulbright Scholar at Tufts University, and he holds a PhD in Planning from the University of Waterloo. In 2017, Maxwell was identified by the Order of Canada and the Walrus Foundation as 1 of 50 Canadians under the age of 35 guiding the future of Canada.

Chantelle Haughton is a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at Cardiff Metropolitan University and a Senior HEA Fellow. She is a Forest School Leader and trainer responsible for developing an Outdoor Learning Centre, which uses an ancient strip of woodland and concrete patches on the university campus. Chantelle was awarded Student Led Teaching Fellowship Award (2013) and Vice Chancellors Staff Award

for Excellence (2011), and HEA CATE finalist (2017) awards were related to the live, playful, innovative community engagement projects that involve students, local children and practitioners as partners.

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Professor Clive Holtham is Professor of Information Management at Cass Business School and responsible for a significant strand of work on creativity, initially technology oriented, now focussing on educational and arts-based approaches. He co-founded the City University Centre for Creativity, with its thriving Master's in innovation, creativity and leadership. His team has refined methods for stimulating reflection within business innovation processes through visual methods for both students and executives and developed an acclaimed M.B.A. elective on 'The Art of Management'.

Dr. Hadi Hosseini is an assistant professor in the Department of Computer Science at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). His research interest lies at the interface of artificial intelligence, computer science and economics. More specifically, most of his research is on algorithmic game theory, matching theory, social choice and computational fair division. Beside his work in multiagent systems, he studies novel teaching approaches in higher education pedagogy. Hadi was a postdoctoral research fellow at Carnegie Mellon University. Prior to that, he received his Ph.D. in computer science from the University of Waterloo, where he also worked as an instructional developer at the Centre for Teaching Excellence. He was a recipient of several awards including the government of Canada's NSERC fellowship and UW's Exceptional Teaching Award.

John Hudson is a co-founder of Bright Sparks Theatre Company. John's ongoing work over the past five years has seen a gamut of productions with Devon-based 'Wolf and Water' and 'Get Changed'

Theatre Companies. John is member of the Patient/Carer community at University of Leeds School of Medicine.

Seth Hudson serves George Mason University as Assistant Professor of Game Writing in the Computer Game Design program. He teaches story design for computer games, criticism and research methods, and the history of computer games. Hudson's scholarship has addressed topics including international humanitarian law in games; student identity in higher education; pedagogy in game writing; portfolio-focused curriculum development and involving students' undergraduate research. Past conference engagements include Computer Game Design (CGD), the American Society for International Law, the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and the East Coast Games Conference, where he organises and produces the Education Summit.

Professor Alison James is a Professor of Learning and Teaching at the University of Winchester, a National Teaching Fellow and Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy in the UK. She is co-author, with Stephen D. Brookfield, of *Engaging Imagination: Helping Students Become Creative and Reflective Thinkers*, published by Jossey Bass in 2014. Her long-standing interests in higher education are the use and development of creative and alternative approaches to tertiary learning. In particular, she has explored this in relation to personal development planning, reflective practice and identity and self-construction within the disciplines. Alison is an accredited LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® Facilitator.

Dr. Debra Josephson Abrams a committed Freirean, has taught English to native and non-native English users for decades. A frequent conference presenter, Abrams publishes often and is a monthly columnist for Multibriefs Education, with articles in TESOL's *English Language Bulletin* and other publications. She is Assistant Professor of English at Seoul National University of Science and Technology (Korea) and was the U.S. Department of State 2016–2017 English Language Fellow at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. Abrams's professional expertise includes critical pedagogy; teacher training, peer coaching and

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Emma King is the Director of Instructional Design at Keypath Education UK, where she works with a team of Instructional Designers and Developers to partner with academic colleagues to deliver world-class, accessible online learning. Emma's expertise in approaches to online learning has been central to her previous role at the University of Warwick, supporting colleagues to develop their skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality learning opportunities. Emma has worked across all phases of education and draws on her experiences as a school teacher to inform a range of innovative approaches to teaching and learning, including effective use of space and the potential of game-based learning.

Dr. Ann Marie Klein teaches literature at the University of St. Thomas in MN. Previously, and she taught in Dallas at SMU and UD where she obtained her Ph.D. Before doctoral studies, she helped found a competitive bilingual high school in Finland. Her publications include an article in the forthcoming G. M. Hopkins anniversary edition of *Religion and the Arts* and two articles in *Hopkins Quarterly*: one on Duns Scotus's influence on Hopkins and the other on Hopkins's friendship with poet Robert Bridges. Her examinations of parallels between Eliot's *Romola* and Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* were published in the *Victorian Institute Journal* and between More's *Utopia* and Plato's *Phaedrus* in *Liberal Arts and Core Texts*. She is finishing a book on work's dignity in Hopkins's prose and poetry.

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Roger has an international profile as an academic and innovator. He is a Wellcome Trust Engagement Fellow and in 2011 became a National Teaching Fellow. He is passionate about engagement, which he sees as a translational resource bridging the worlds of clinical practice, biomedical science, patients and society.

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Dr. Jennie Mills is a Learning and Development Adviser at the University of Warwick, where she leads professional development for new academic staff. Her previous role with the Higher Education Academy as a Consultant in Academic Practice focussed on Innovative Pedagogies, particularly within the Arts and Humanities. Jennie is currently researching the role of wonderment in HE teaching and learning, and how arts-inspired methodologies and creative play can be used to enhance academic practice, academic development and to challenge what constitutes knowledge in educational research.

Dr. Chrissi Nerantzi (@chrissinerantzi) is a Principal Lecturer within the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK. She is passionate about creativity, play, learning through making and openness and has initiated a wide range of professional development opportunities that bring these three elements together in her practice and research. Chrissi is a certified LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® facilitator with experience using the method and variations of it in a wide range of higher education context. Chrissi is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Fellow of the Staff and Educational Development Association, a National Teaching Fellow, the Learning Technologist of the Year 2017 and received the Award for Best Open Research Practice in 2018 by the Global OER Graduate Network.

Dr. Darren Nixon is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology and a Senior Fellow of the HEA. He is the co-author of a key textbook in the sociology of work. His research explores the impact of de-industrialisation on working-class men, with a particular focus on the meaning of work and unemployment and the exploration of how class and gender intersect

to produce particular kinds of work orientations. Dr. Nixon is interested in the 'Students as Producers' critical pedagogy and is currently involved in applying it within an ongoing collaboration with Dr. Natalia Gerodetti and students at Leeds Beckett University to develop games-based learning resources. He is particularly interested in how student intelligence can be incorporated into teaching practices and curriculum development.

Dr. Michael Palmer is the Director of the University of Virginia's Center for Teaching Excellence. His educational development research centres on teaching consultation techniques, graduate student professional development, course design initiatives and the impact intense professional development activities have on teacher beliefs and practices. His work has won one national research and two innovation awards from the POD Network, North America's largest educational development community. His pedagogical interests include course design, active learning, student motivation, creative thinking and teaching large-enrolment courses, particularly in STEM disciplines. He teaches a highly interdisciplinary course on infinity, a seminar on the science of learning and a large-enrolment, inquiry-based laboratory course for first-year chemistry students.

Dr. Caroline Pelletier is Reader in Culture, and Communication at UCL's Institute of Education, whose research focuses on subjectivity, games, simulation and new media. She has carried out ethnographic research projects in NHS hospitals across London, focusing on the representation of work in simulation centres. More generally, she is interested in the relationship between new media technologies in workplaces and reconfigurations of knowledge practices and subjectivity.

Mélanie Péron is a Senior Lecturer in the French and Francophone Studies department at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the Associate Director of the Penn-in-Tours summer programme. On campus, she teaches courses on French history and culture. During the summer, she teaches a writing course in Tours, France, where she encourages students to « write on walls ».

Dr. Martin E. Purcell is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Huddersfield, where he is Course Leader for the

undergraduate Youth and Community Work programme. Having worked in community development and youth work settings across the UK for over thirty years, Martin continues to be involved in managing and delivering services for young people (particularly marginalized groups and those experiencing mental health issues) in West Yorkshire. Martin's research explores the translation of professional youth work and community development values into practice, focusing particularly on the demonstration of 'professional love' in work with children and young people.

Suzanne Rankin-Dia has been working with international students at University of the Arts London since 2001 and currently leads the Academic Language and Communication pathway on the International Preparation for Fashion at the London College of Fashion. She has a particular interest in implementing innovative and creative approaches into an EAP classroom and to empower international students to reach their full potential.

Julia Reeve is a Creative Learning Designer and DMU Teacher Fellow within Library and Learning Services at De Montfort University. She co-ordinates the East Midlands Centre for Writing PAD: http://writingpad.our.dmu.ac.uk/. Julia's pedagogic practice involves applying creative, arts-based methods to the teaching of theory in order to deepen learning and increase engagement. Her role involves the design, development and delivery of innovative workshops for students and staff, to foster confidence, self-reflection and creative thinking for writing and research, with a particular focus on researcher development. Julia previously worked as a designer in the fashion industry, a lecturer in Further Education and a Senior Lecturer in Contextual Studies for fashion programmes.

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Dr. Louise Robinson is a lecturer in Forensic Biology at the University of Derby. She is an advocate of gamification and has introduced numerous examples throughout her undergraduate teaching within both forensic science and bioscience. Louise has given talks on the use of gamification in higher education at multiple conferences and also led workshops at universities around the UK. Recently, she has designed and produced her first educational board game for use within a level 6 Wildlife Conservation module at University of Derby. The game, called 'Park Life', utilises the content of the module to draw topics together and demonstrate interaction of themes as well as provide a method of revision for the module. Park Life is presented within the text as a successful case study example.

Andrea Roe is an artist whose work examines the nature of human and animal biology, behaviour, communication and interaction within specific ecological contexts. She has undertaken residencies in a number of institutions—ranging from the Wellcome Trust to the Crichton Royal Hospital, to the National Museums of Scotland—where she has learned about and responded to research projects and collections. Her current research explores how visual art might add its voice to debates around complex cultural traditions which impact on the lives of other species. This research brings her into conversation with scientists at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and Scotland's Rural College who share her interests in representing animal sentience and telling animal life stories from a non-human perspective.

Siân Sarwar is a Lecturer in Early Childhood Studies at Cardiff Metropolitan University and HEA Fellow. Her research interests include music education, creativity and child participation in education, informal

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Professor Dudley Shallcross was the first National Teaching Fellow in chemistry in the UK and has been a co-Director of the Bristol ChemLabS Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and is currently CEO of the Primary Science Teaching Trust. He has won national and international awards for his contributions to science education, and his interests include transition from primary to secondary and secondary to tertiary education, the use of appropriate contexts, e-enhanced learning and the use of practicals in learning. In his spare time, he is an expert of the Earth's atmosphere.

Dr. Nicola Simmons is a faculty member in Graduate and Undergraduate Studies in Education at Brock University. Past roles include regional Vice-President, Canada, for the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, board member for the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, including Vice-President, SoTL, Founding Chair of SoTL Canada and past chair of the Canadian Educational Developers Caucus. Her teaching and research interests are in higher and adult education, including scholarship of teaching and learning, participatory pedagogy and creative activities, educational development, and adult personal and professional lifelong learning, development and meaning-making. In 2017, she was awarded a 3M National Teaching Fellowship and the Educational Developers' Caucus inaugural Distinguished Educational Development Career Award.

Sandra Sinfield is co-author of *Teaching, Learning and Study Skills: A Guide for Tutors* and *Essential Study Skills: The Complete Guide to Success at University* (4th Edn.), a co-founder of the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education and a Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Professional and Educational Development at London Metropolitan University. Sandra has worked as a laboratory technician, a freelance copywriter, an Executive Editor (*Medicine Digest*, circulation 80,000 doctors) and with the Islington Green School Community Play written by Alan Clarke, *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, and produced at Saddlers Wells. With Tom Burns, she has developed theatre and film in unusual places—and is interested in creativity as emancipatory practice in HE.

Juliette Smeed is the Study Co-ordinator in the Business School at the University of Buckingham. She has previously held academic skills, research teaching and student support roles in the UK and New Zealand. Juliette is interested in the social and cognitive processes of learning. In addition, her experience in business schools, teacher training and humanities departments has fostered an interest in the disciplinary nature of learning in higher education.

Professor Sophy Smith is Professor of Creative Technologies Practice at the Institute of Creative Technologies, DeMontfort University, Leicester. Sophy is a practice-based researcher whose focus includes creative collaboration and inter/multi/transdisciplinary practice, and she works extensively as a composer and performer on professional collaborative arts projects. As Programme Leader for the IOCT's innovative transdisciplinary master's in creative technologies (M.A./M.Sc.) and digital arts (M.A.), Sophy works with students at the convergence of the e-sciences and digital arts and humanities and this is reflected in her pedagogic research interests.

Rachel Stead is a Learning Development Adviser at the University of Surrey and Senior Fellow of the HEA. Since gaining fellowship, her research has focused on the potential contribution of play to learning in a variety of disciplines and areas ranging from veterinary medicine and health sciences to personal and professional development. Her most recent work has involved collaborating with faculties to develop

engaging, playful learning activities using both Play-Doh and LEGO® to aid critical reflection and revision.

Jools Symons is Patient and Public Involvement Manager (University of Leeds, Institute of Medical Education). Jools is a pioneer in the involvement of patients and carers in medical education. Her focus is the empowerment of patients to be part of the educational world and recognition of the unique perspective they bring.

Kaye Towlson SFHEA, is Academic Team Manager (Information Literacy and Teaching), DMU Teacher Fellow, De Montfort University. Kaye has worked as a Librarian for many years; she ran the business information service at DMU and has worked as a subject librarian with responsibility for humanities. Her work in visual and creative learning with Julia Reeve led to the establishment of a Writing PAD centre at DMU. She has experimented with visual learning techniques within library/information literacy, employability and other contexts. She is interested in using visual and creative techniques to overcome textual barriers for visual learners and disciplines.

Dr. Ian Turner is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at the University of Derby. Ian was previously head of forensic science and lectured in molecular biology, genetics, science communication as forensic document and handwriting analysis. Ian was named as a National Teaching Fellow in 2014 and in Royal Society of Biology Higher Education Lecturer of the year in 2017. Ian is known for a more creative form of teaching called lecture theatre 'pantomime' and has research interests in the areas of creative and innovative learning, teaching and assessment and gamification.

Marc Walton is a co-founder of Bright Sparks Theatre Company. Marc has been Stage Manager for 'The Beautiful Octopus Club' (a nightclub run by and for Learning Disabled adults) since it began at the Wardrobe Club in Leeds over 15 years ago. Marc is member of the Patient/Carer community at University of Leeds School of Medicine.

Dr. Hoda Wassif is a Principal Lecturer in Medical and Dental Education at the University of Bedfordshire (UoB) and Director of

Teaching and Learning across the School of Healthcare Practice. With a background in dentistry, Hoda achieved her Master's in clinical dentistry in 2000, her Ph.D. in 2008, and in 2016, she completed her M.A. Education. Hoda is passionate about the teaching and learning of postgraduate students in health care context. Currently, she leads M.A. dental law and ethics as well as M.A. medical education courses at UoB. Her research interests focus on innovation in teaching and learning, ethical practice and continuous professional development.

Dr. Lindsay Wheeler is Assistant Director of STEM Education Initiatives of the University of Virginia's Center for Teaching Excellence. Her research focuses on how educational development programmes for instructors impact teaching practices and ultimately student learning outcomes across STEM disciplines. She has redesigned and taught general chemistry courses and developed cross-departmental teaching courses to support graduate teaching assistants in their teaching. Her pedagogical interests include emphasising inclusive teaching practices to promote diversity in STEM disciplines, integrating student reflection on learning and utilising inquiry-based instruction. In 2015, Dr. Wheeler and Dr. Palmer received the *Robert J. Menges Award for Outstanding Research in Educational Development* for research examining student perceptions of course syllabi. Dr. Wheeler presents at conferences and runs workshops related to STEM education.

Melanie Webb (Mel) is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Bedfordshire in the Department of Health and Social Sciences specialising in children's nursing. Mel has two B.Scs from the Open University and a M.Sc. from the University of Bedfordshire. Mel gained her HEA Senior Fellow through her use of games within education and mentoring.

Sarah Williamson is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education and Professional Development, University of Huddersfield. She specialises in the training of creative arts professionals and graduates to be art, design and music lecturers in the lifelong learning sector (FE, HE, adult education and training). Her research explores the value and transformative impact of arts-based approaches in professional education.

Boris Willis is the founder of Black Russian Games, Chief Artistic Officer of Boris Willis Moves and an Associate Professor of Experimental Game Design at George Mason University. He has performed with Liz Lerman, Elizabeth Streb, Jacob's Pillow's Men Dancers and is founder of the dance video blog danceaday.com. Willis has an MFA in Dance and Technology from The Ohio State University, a BFA in Dance from George Mason University and is a graduate of The NC School of the Arts. He is the recipient of fellowships from the Kennedy Center Local Dance Commission and Virginia Commission for the Arts Choreography.

Sharon Witt is Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Winchester. Her research interests include playful, experiential approaches to primary school geography and place responsive learning. She is an active member of the Geographical Association sitting on the Early Years and Primary Phase Committee, and she is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. With a colleague, she is currently exploring innovative teaching and learning ideas that connect children to environments through place attention and responsiveness (@Attention2place). Sharon is currently studying for a professional doctorate at the University of Exeter.

Dr. Maged Zakher is a Lecturer in Cross-Cultural Management at The University of Northampton. He obtained a Master's degree in intercultural communication from the University of Bedfordshire and a Ph.D. in social sciences research methodology with a thesis titled 'The Use of Sacred Texts as Tools to Enhance Social Research Interviews'. He has taught intercultural competence and communication in business, and he also wrote on 'Post-Revolution Egyptians' Perception of Selected Human Rights' as part of his studies in international relations. Maged is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and he is involved in cultural training, English/Arabic translation and blogging.

List of Figures

Welcome to Play!

Whoever wants to understand much, must play much
Gottfried Benn, German Poet and Essayist, 1886–1956

As you have picked up this collection, we venture that you are either already a play convert or at least open to becoming one. You might be wondering why you are not in this book, or perhaps you are feeling unsure or sceptical? Wherever you find yourself on the play spectrum, we hope that as you read on you too will agree that attitudes are changing towards play in HE. Not everywhere, and not all at once, but, as we will show, academics across continents are integrating playful practices into university teaching.

As our contributions will show, the term play is not as easy to explain as one might first think. Our offerings give a multitude of perspectives on play, and we share these as they are, for you to decide which ones resonate. One perspective is that play is free, unfettered activity intended to bring joy, relaxation and liberation to the player. The second argues that it is rule-bound and structured and has a particular purpose. The third argues that it is an immersive experience which

frees us up to make mistakes, new discoveries, go beyond convention and learn through moments of discomfort. Twenty-one years ago, Brian Sutton-Smith (1997: 1) noted that there is little agreement and much ambiguity as to what play is and he is still right. Just how varied interpretations of, and contexts for, play can be is made visible in our 'How to Read This Book' section.

Before we explore the nature of play further, however, let us rewind our professional play clocks, to let you know how we came to believe in the power of play in higher education.

Our own play practices began a while ago. Chrissi first started playing to learn in 2006, at a time when she was unusual in pioneering play in her teaching; Alison started—accidentally—in 2009, making emergency use of some LEGO® bricks to explain a project visually in a presentation (James 2015). While we were lucky to find supportive colleagues, we also encountered resistance to the idea of play in HE, a pattern that seems to play out in the sector. In 2012 when Alison and Stephen Brookfield were writing *Engaging Imagination: Helping Students Become Creative and Reflective Thinkers* (2014), they originally wanted to call it creativity, imagination and play. They were advised against this, on the grounds that the word play in the title of an academic text would put readers off. Three years later, when we first mooted this book we encountered similar qualms. However, through our collaboration in 2015 with Professor Norman Jackson on Creative Academic (www.creativeacademic.uk), we could see a counter movement emerging.

Norman had set up Creative Academic as an online magazine offering a creative and alternative outlet for presenting practice in learning, teaching and research. We co-edited the second issue of the magazine, entitled *Exploring Play in HE*, and sent out an open invitation for contributions. We published 37 stories of play in HE from the UK, Canada, America, Australia, Greece and Finland and had to produce two volumes to include them all (Nerantzi and James 2015a, b).

Content ranged from the use of games during geography field trips, Friday afternoon experiments in biochemistry in response to 'what will happen if I do this?', the integration of dance and movement into business courses and the creation of animated vegetables as a form of assessment. They were lively, empirically informed and reflective accounts

which confirmed for us that play in tertiary learning has been largely unpublicised or unexplored. The interest they generated prompted us to look more deeply and widely into play in HE, inspired also by our own work with LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® techniques within and outside the university. Supporting our views were the results of a survey of academics' beliefs about play, conducted by Jenny Willis for Creative Academic. This revealed that tutors do not play simply for fun. They play in order to have greater freedom, more personal involvement and less structure, to be instinctive, open and explore without having a fixed outcome in mind. The survey underscored that its respondents were already using play in teaching to engender deeper learning and even 'undo the lack of play from A' levels'—i.e. forms of study and assessment dominant in compulsory education—bewailed by one contributor. There is a sense therefore that play is regenerative and repairing, as well as enjoyable.

A year after Creative Academic, we could see interest in play effervesce in the UK and internationally; more people seem prepared to try play or perhaps are more public in their use of play for learning—in art galleries, civic initiatives, universities, in social networks and online communities. We can see the evidence for this in a few examples from 2016.

In March 2016 in Birmingham, over eighty of the UK's top educators attended the Association of National Teaching Fellows annual symposium, dedicated to playing and researching involving all the senses. Workshop topics included using play to harness the mind and will (including to snap arrows!); creating novel, messy spaces in which learning, subject and identity are all reconfigured; encouraging responsible sexual health in students; using the Bloodhound sports car for teaching maths; and creating identity jam jars. Outside HE, in the April, The Tate Modern gallery in London housed *PLAYING UP*, an artwork by Sibylle Peter of the Theatre of Research in Germany, exploring the potential of Live Art to bridge generations. Drawing on key Live Art themes and seminal works, *PLAYING UP* took the form of a game played by adults and children together (www.playingup.thisisliveart.co.uk).

By May 2016, the Counterplay community in Aarhus, Denmark, had become a non-governmental organisation with a growing reputation and influence. Its remit? Running yearly festivals in Aarhus,

Denmark, dedicated to playful living, working and learning. Its events offered hundreds of different workshops to even greater numbers of participants. Such has been its success that from 2017 satellite events have started to take place in other countries. In July 2017, the 7th *Serious Play Conference,* which explores all aspects of game-based education, was hosted by George Mason University, with speakers from commercial companies, military organisations and universities.

In July 2016, Chrissi, who has been instrumental in galvanising enthusiasm for play, was invited to speak about play at Digifest (Nerantzi 2016a). This invitation arose out of interest in the Creative Academic issues on play, her #creativeHE course, and her work in the open access community. She had also set up The Greenhouse in 2014 (Nerantzi 2016b), an institution-wide initiative by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Manchester Metropolitan University to bring creative practitioners across disciplines together, nurture them and empower them to grow and innovate in their teaching. #creativeHE started as the Creativity for Learning in HE module that she turned into an open course and open community, offered in collaboration with the Creative Academic. The interest this generated has informed or been shared by a range of subsequent activities, including increased overall interest in play, and formal events, conferences and publications.

Also in July 2016, Manchester Metropolitan University inaugurated what has become their annual *Playful Learning* conference, with three days of play underpinned by research and supported by high profile 'players'. One of their first keynotes, Karen Lawson, Collaborative Learning Lead with the Scottish Government's Ingage Team, spoke about her *Emporium of Dangerous Ideas*. A two-week festival first held in Scotland in 2014 aimed at shifting thinking in education, *The Emporium* aimed to 're-establish the importance of dangerous ideas as agents of change in education'. It hosted 18 events and attracted more than 1000 delegates including those from colleges and universities. The Hidden Door Festival explored using disused public spaces as learning environments, while the Open Door initiative invited people to swap their normal working environment for an unusual setting (in one case to a brewery). Just these two examples show how playing with spaces as potential learning environments opens up new opportunities. In

creating these, *The Emporium* helped forge links between education and community through play.

These examples confirm our belief that academics, researchers, students and managers can all benefit from play. In its limitless forms, it is a means of freeing up thinking, opening new channels, confronting obstacles and reframing persistent challenges. This is essential at a time when universities around the world are struggling with increased numbers and reduced resources. The identity of the university and its purpose is under siege; the climate is uncertain and unstable. We are all tasked with coming up with new, bright, motivating, resourceful and efficient solutions to support diverse learners to attain, while juggling bureaucratic and regulatory demands. We argue that play offers a response to these challenges in terms not simply of pedagogic value, but also of well-being.

The network of academics who believe in the value of play to break ice, enthuse, shake up thinking, build connections, bond people, stimulate, relax and cheer is growing. Playful communities are springing up, within and across universities and the wider world. The benefits of play are expressed in the voices of those concerned with the need to re-energise pedagogy, revive a love of enquiry, study, nurture and provoke curiosity. Academics are magpies who are constantly on the lookout for something new to bring into their repertoire, to help them bring learning alive for and with their students in the face of tests, measurements, money, uncertainty and stress.

Three years ago, when few people were writing about play in HE, we felt we could fill that gap, or would perhaps need to persuade people to play. One of the wonderful revelations of writing and editing this has been finding so many colleagues who are already playing or open to try. We have, of course, met colleagues who are less keen, or who fear they will be derided or accused of 'dumbing down' the curriculum by their peers. It may simply be that they can't remember what play is for or what it might achieve. Or perhaps it is that their conceptions of play and of the function of the academy are very particular. They may say 'my job is to educate my students, not entertain them'. We respond 'why can't you do both?'. Informed by evidence and backed by science, theory, pedagogy and practice, we hope this collection shows how you can.

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How to Read This book

As if you need telling! You will do it in whatever way suits. You might wish to dip in and out, or choose a theme, author or section or read from start to finish. It is up to you. However, we thought it would be worth letting you know what you are in for, in case you are expecting a certain kind of collection, or a certain homogeneity of writing.

First of all, our material does not divide neatly and evenly into chapters, nor is there a linear narrative which builds up over the different contributions. There is a holding structure, if you like: the collection is book-ended by an opening section setting the scene for play, and a closing one which offers a model for pedagogic thinking about play. However, the start and finish are not there to corral your thinking or provide a tidy framework, but rather to create a net to enclose a varied catch of 'fish'. In a gesture towards harmony, we have grouped the contents of our net into six thematic clusters, with names evoking the natures and common interests of our writers. Inevitably, we have found it impossible to create neat boundaries around each one, and didn't want to, as deep connecting strands run between all of them and naturally blur their edges. Our thoughts, ideas and practices are interwoven in so many ways. *Trainers and Developers* are also *Wordsmiths*

and Communicators. Gamers and Puzzlers are also *Experimenters and Engagers. Wanderers and Wonderers* even mentally or metaphorically may be the architects of other kinds of play forays—including those undertaken by our *Builders and Simulators*. So expect and forgive messiness, and don't allow our attempts at organisation constrain your desire to imagine, explore and enjoy.

Our voices and writing styles are all our own and also diverse. Some are recognisable for their traditional academic format, while others are playful in form and flavour; one or two may use terminology that is unfamiliar. There are sketches (short accounts) and explorations (longer, more theorised considerations), framed by pieces by us as editors. Expect a certain eclecticism in terms of the sounds of the words on the page, as well as their subjects. It may jar you, or it may stimulate you. Whatever the effect, the variation is deliberate.

With so many contributors, we have stood back to allow for their views and experiences to be heard and respected. We have sought to represent as many disciplines as possible, to be inclusive and to give a little insight into different approaches to play considerations, aims, priorities and contexts. We are delighted to have authors from different countries and professional areas to join us in this task. However, what you have here is selected illustrations of play in HE and inevitably not the whole picture. Perspectives, opinions and experiences differ; there may be gaps or variances across cultures and disciplines; some parts will resonate with you more than others. We have allowed for US and UK spelling conventions while aiming for consistency within contributions. Where we are all united, however, is in our belief in the importance of play in higher education. This belief is expressed in different forms: the lyrical, poetic, scientific, thoughtful and practical, in contexts ranging from art to zoology. The wealth of examples gives the lie to the suggestion that play is inappropriate for higher level study. We hope they will prompt you to consider how you might draw on, integrate or amend such forms of play in your own fields of activity. Don't hold back. The time to play is now.

What's in Here? Our Contents at a Glance

While some readers will have been drawn to the book from the abstracts on the Palgrave website, other readers might find this 'headlines' section useful.

Welcome to Play—admittedly, you have just read this bit but we hope it makes clear the activities that have led up to the production of this book. A scene setter.

How to Read This Book—an explanation of our magazine style, non-linear mixture of contributions.

Section 1

Making a Case for the Playful University is a rallying cry for play in HE, introducing themes, interpretations and theoretical perspectives which will recur throughout the book. It argues for the importance of play in HE to be better understood, and for its international and inter-disciplinary value.

Trainers and Developers
…stories about enabling the potential of others through curriculum and activity design, teacher training and coaching…

Becoming Playful: The Power of a Ludic Module shows how playful practices allow students to find and develop their academic identity and 'be with' each other.

ESCAPE! Puzzling Out Learning Theories Through Play. This escape game (in which participants are locked in a room and work collaboratively to make their escape) presents an opportunity for new teaching staff to experiment with unfamiliar pedagogic concepts through play.

'I learned to Play Again' shows how reconnecting with play is essential for adult sports coaches and helps broaden a student's view of actual 'life situations' and the skills required.

The Training Game introduces psychology students to the power of play to recognise, shape and steer behaviour in learning.

Play in Practice counters the assumption that play-based learning is of value only to early years teaching and learning by outlining how it has been used to develop and carry out research within a higher education postgraduate programme.

Experience of Running a 'Play and Creativity' Module in a School of Art and Design shares the author's motivation for and experience of running the module to inspire others.

Wanderers and Wonderers
…Stories about place, space and mystery…

The Dark Would is a project which creates mysterious and unusual environments within which participants can play, feel safe, stimulated, and engage as whole people with fundamental epistemic questions of the nature, creation and exploration of knowledge.

Playing with Place: Responding to Invitations tells stories of play and place-based education with students studying to be primary school teachers.

Playful Pedagogies: Collaborations Between Undergraduates and School Pupils in the Outdoor Learning Centre and the Pop-Up 'Playscape'. This sketch outlines how playful, creative practice can help students develop their understanding of challenging concepts and/or encourage them to make clearer links between theory and practice.

Cabinets of Curiosities: Playing with Artefacts in Professional Teacher Education.
This case study describes playful object-oriented pedagogy in professional teacher education, using a Cabinet of Curiosities theme rooted in the 'wunderkammer' or 'wonder rooms' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Teaching and Learning Inside the Culture Shoe Box shows how such a box, filled with cultural objects, can be used to enhance students' learning experiences especially in teaching culture, ethics and communication.

Experimenters and Engagers
…Stories about enquiry, exploration, outreach, magic, method and madness…

Dopamine and the Hard Work of Learning Science describes the role of play in science, the importance of play in science pedagogy, and ways play in teaching helps create engaging learning environments.

Play in Engineering Education explores play as a process of discovery in engineering education which inspires and provokes wonder.

Experiencing the Necessity of Project Management Through the Egg-Dropping-Challenge takes a well-known game to enable students to experience and reflect on the challenges of project work.

Public Engagement Activities for Chemistry Students demonstrates an outreach programme which provides opportunities to 'play' which stimulate public interest in chemistry and also benefits the postgraduate student facilitators.

Playful Maths argues that Maths is a highly creative subject, whose playfulness can be detected in a vast range of games and pattern spotting, revealed in even the most mundane daily activities.

Connecting People and Places Using Worms and Waste outlines two playful workshops which address key concepts of environmental care, sustainability and animal welfare.

Maths, Meccano® and Motivation uses playful building to enable learners to thrive within mathematics, not be on the outside while mathematics teaching is 'done to them'—knowledge is not passively received but is actively built through participation.

Playful Urban Learning Space is based on an unusual collaboration between a business school and a fine art practitioner, supported by a Creative Entrepreneur in Residence funding scheme.

Novelty Shakes Things Up in the History Classroom. This sketch reveals the possibilities when desperation drives you to play in order to enable students to grapple with difficult and complicated events in history.

Wordsmiths and Communicators
…Stories about spoken, written and visual words…

Don't Write on Walls! is a project built around the notions of imagination and play, which invites participants on a 'study abroad' visit to engage in a narrative with their host city.

Poetry as Play shows how 'riskless' poetry-writing helps students 'see' more clearly both the natural world and the spiritual realm, while learning to contemplate and exchange insights.

On Word Play in Support of Academic Development shows how university lecturers are encouraged to play with language to discover new meanings and make connections with teaching practice and teacher identity.

The Communications Factory uses playful workshops to put students at ease with intercultural communication in a global classroom.

Playful Writing with Writing PAD discusses playful techniques from the arts to enhance engagement with academic writing and research across disciplines and levels.

Builders and Simulators
…Stories about theatres, bricks and modelling dough…

Wigs, Brown Sauce and Theatrical Dames examines how clinical simulation, performed in hospitals as a form of training, can be understood as play, involving creating and maintaining fictions, role-playing theatrical characters and erecting satisfying narrative structures.

Using Play to Bridge the Communication Divide uses theatrical collaboration to enable students to understand how doctors need to communicate challenging concepts and procedures to a diverse population.

Building the Abstract: Metaphorical Play-Doh® Modelling in Health Sciences. This piece explores the potential of metaphorical model making using Play-Doh® as a multi-sensory approach to learning development in higher education.

Our Learning Journey with LEGO® summarises ten years of activity working with LEGO® and LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® for academic, educational and staff development.

Using LEGO® to Explore 'Professional Love' as an Element of Youth Work Practice:
This sketch details how dialogical and transformational learning is enhanced when LEGO® is used to facilitate classroom-based discussions with undergraduate students about critical aspects of their professional practice.

Creating LEGO® Representations of Theory shows how play-based activities, such as 'building' academic papers in progress, can help students break existing thinking patterns to uncover their implicit thinking and connections.

Gamers and Puzzlers
…Stories about rule making and breaking…

A Dancer and a Writer Walk into a Classroom examines how play can enhance teaching in game design and game writing courses.

From the Players Point of View assesses how game-based teaching techniques in both hard (computer science) and soft (urban planning) sciences show improvements in student perception of engagement, creativity, teamwork and enjoyment.

Wardopoly is a bespoke in-house practice-based board game adopting clinical simulation principles and game mechanics adapted from the monopoly genre to empower students to voluntarily adopt actively engaged, self-determining learning behaviours.

Using Play to Design Play demonstrates the benefits of working with students to design and produce games for use in sociology teaching.

Table Top Gaming in Wildlife Conservation: 'Park Life' uses a game strategy to create a sustainable wildlife park through decisions regarding investment of their limited funds.

'Frogger It, I'd Rather Be Playing Computer Games Than Referencing My Assignment' discusses an approach adapted from the classic 'Frogger' game to inspire learning about correct referencing.

Using Play to Facilitate Faculty–Student Partnership describes how play can be used to facilitate academic faculty–student partnership for module design.

Imagination Needs Moodling describes and evaluates games that have been successfully implemented in pre-college ESL courses and college English composition courses.

It's a Serious Business Learning How to Reference—Playfully showcases approaches which help to capture students' attention and lighten the learning experience in a business and management context.

In the Playground

The Playground Model Revisited is a new exploration into a framework to encourage playfulness and experimentation for academic staff and further professionals who teach or support learning in higher education.

Coda. Here, the editors bring together key messages from this highly diverse text, ending with a question and an invitation to the reader.