



GAME ON!

Diving into a diverse array of case studies in gamification and gameful design in higher education, Kevin Bell's *Game on!* is a series of brief looks that feel in-depth. Researched with an advanced knowledge of gamification, and written from the experienced perspective of teaching and learning, the title provides educators at all levels with a primer of gamification that can also serve as the basis for implementation.

Game on! Examines each use of gamification, gamebased learning, and gameful design, with a focus on articulating their effects on engagement and subsequently, learning outcomes. To do this, Bell uses concepts that would be familiar to educators who practice social-constructivism (even if they don't realise that's what they're doing). Within the wider gamification literature, Bell's expertise in pedagogic theory and the principles of gamification is a welcome combination, bound by an adroit critical analysis of the interaction between human beings, information, and concept functionality. Ultimately, these observations are in an empathetic, personal, and enthusiastic tone that isn't always on display in academic writing within this subject area.

The differing uses of gamification, gameful design, and game based learning covered here are both overt and subtle, and are as diverse as the educators who employed them. Multiple subject areas, levels of study, and academic cultures occur throughout each use-case, widening the applicability of the content. Much like the process of gamifying itself, Bell's analysis of each use-case is both nuanced and systematic, first examining the rationale and the state of gamification, the elements used, the teaching concepts tapped through gamification, and the outcome of the initiative including follow-up interviews where possible.

The intention of the book is to enable practitioners to gamify, explaining in concise but authoritative detail the nature of gamification concepts, and how they function in practice with established principles of pedagogy. However, this does not

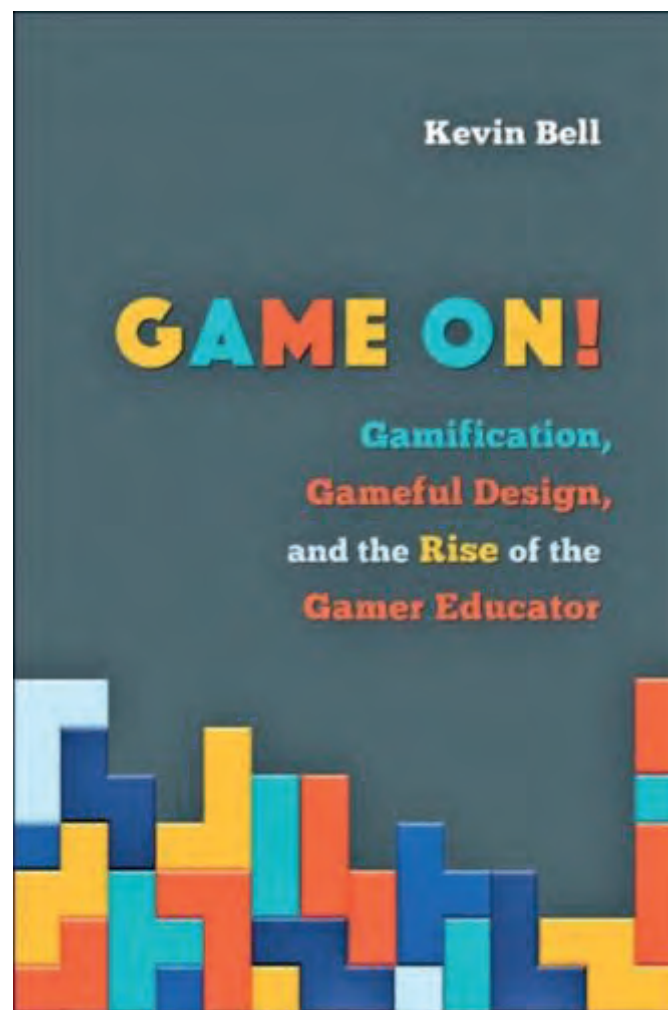
mean that *Game on!* is solely applicable to the 'in-class' practitioner. With quantitative elements as well, a focus on students' experiences, and bullet point summaries, gamification is viewed with the kind of practical big-picture thinking crucial to university and academic leadership when considering the risks and rewards of innovation and large-scale implementation.

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Game on! Gamification, gameful design, and the rise of the gamer educator, 2017, by Kevin Bell. Johns Hopkins University Press. 216 pages.