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# PHILOSOPHY'S GAMBIT

## Play and Being Played

Edited by  
Jeremy Sampson

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# Philosophy's Gambit

*Play and Being Played*

Foreword by Francis Mootz  
University of the Pacific, Sacramento, USA

SERIES IN PHILOSOPHY

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### About the editor

**Jeremy Sampson** is the editor of the present volume and is a postgraduate at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, researching in Philosophy, Literary History and Scottish Heritage. Formerly, he was a postgraduate in Philosophical and Systematic Theology at the University of Nottingham, UK. Born in the UK, he was educated at a number of British universities including London, Durham and St. Andrews. Joining the teaching profession in 1993, he has lived and worked in England, Cyprus, The Bahamas and now Hong Kong, where he has taught English Literature, Theory of Knowledge and Ethics for over twenty years. He holds a doctorate in Hermeneutics and Literary History from the University of Chichester, UK (2018). Since the 1990s he has been a freelance writer for various publications such as Oxford University Press and the Times Higher Education Supplement, writing on such diverse subjects as Education, Philosophy, Theory of Science and Twentieth-Century Literature. His most recent publications include 'Being Played: Gadamer and Philosophy's Hidden Dynamic' (Vernon Press, 2019). Also, he is editing a further volume on ludic theory 'Philosophy's Arena: Play and Players in a Gamified World' (Vernon Press, 2024). Included among future projects are 'Game of Shadows: Gadamer and the Enigma of Health', co-written by Mark G. Harrison and Michael Ladomery, exploring Gadamerian thought upon the art and practice of medicine and health, together with a historical volume entitled 'Superpowers of the Ancient World: The Deadly Rivalry Between Rome and Carthage' (2026). Latterly, he has written short stories for European publications and is working on his first novel 'The Long Dark Playtime of the Soul'.

### Summary

Living in an era of immense and bewildering change in technology, pandemic and war, humanity has had cause to challenge the apparent old fixities and certainties of life. Essentially, are we being played? The premise of this volume is that all of human life is underpinned by powerful dynamic systems, so tightly interwoven into our daily lives that we are barely aware of them, whose true nature only comes to light at times of profound disruption or crisis. These powerful dynamic systems, philosophical or otherwise, often fall under the umbrella of ludic theory. Within these pages, some of the leading thinkers of ludic theory from three continents explore its diversity and relevance through the perspectives of some of the world's most famous philosophers.

In many ways, this volume follows on from Sampson's 'Being Played: Gadamer and Philosophy's Hidden Dynamic' (2019). It also draws upon other ludic-centred and ludic-inspired texts that include Mattice's 'Metaphor and Metaphilosophy' (2014) and Arthos' 'Gadamer's Poetics: A Critique of Modern Aesthetics' (2014), together with Frazier's 'Reality, Religion and Passion' (2009) and Homan's 'A Hermeneutics of Poetic Education' (2020). Although this is not the first volume offering an integrated approach to ludic theory, see Ryall (ed), 'The Philosophy of Play' (2013), it offers a diverse and detailed approach to the subject, including not only Western philosophers, but also thinkers from Ancient China, 16th-century India and modern South America.

This volume will be not only of interest to scholars and students of ludic theory and philosophy in general, but because of its deliberate globalised content, it is hoped it might have a wider appeal globally as humanity continues to grapple with significant challenges created by these current winds of change.

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**SUBJECTS** Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Philosophy of Religion

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