

Educational Journal of Living Theories

**Review of Mairin Glenn, Mary Roche, Caitriona McDonagh and Bernie Sullivan's book (2018)
Learning Communities in Educational Partnerships: Action Research as Transformation.
Bloomsbury.**

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My pleasure and interest in this book on learning communities in educational partnerships is because of the way the book embraces the interplay between theory, research and practice and makes it relevant and engaging to me as a practitioner. It provides a narrative exploring how to create nurturing spaces for research where a critical and questioning disposition is expected in a framework of equality. The book explores the experiences of the authors as researchers in different learning communities, as well as setting up learning communities, which brings a depth of knowledge, understanding and perspectives and an 'authenticity' to their voices.

Following a Foreword, Glossary (which is helpful) and introduction the book is organised into four sections, one per author who writes two chapters each. Before concluding, the book has a chapter entitled 'What's in it for me, which looks from the perspective of participating teachers, teacher educators and leaders. The conclusion summarises the understandings of the authors and the reader through the journey of their writing, that 'this is the end of our book and not the end of our learning journey'. The authors believe and espouse the principle of 'contributive social justice', encouraging all readers to gain confidence in their own abilities and to find the freedom of critical reflection and action research within a setting of equality.

This book is a starting point of collaboration and cooperation as readers are invited in the closing sentences of the book, to join and to share their reflections, thoughts and narrative with the authors and other researchers online, through their website. www.eari.ie. The book has 'Reflective Opportunity' sections throughout with questions to engage the reader in this co-creational space of reflection and learning and has encouraged me to share my thoughts through the web link above.

I particularly like the structure and planning that has gone behind this book. The introduction incorporates a section on 'Organization of the Book' which I found especially helpful. The brief summary and key points of each chapter are highlighted, which meant my journey through the book was personally created, as I personalised the order of my reading, reflecting my own learning needs and practice.

The author's highlight Self-Study Action Research as a transformation methodology, enabling educational practitioners to blend practice with knowledge creation, in a transformative journey, as part of a learning community. Guiding the reader through personal reflections and experiences the book outlines all aspects of creating, nurturing and enabling educational learning communities, as spaces of equality and lived values.

As Etienne Wenger-Trayner nicely summarises in the Foreword, this book in itself creates a space where educationalists can come together, in our own time and in our own way and learn together. The book offers a new form of Continual Professional Development, a co-creational research space, and less 'one-shot, knowledge transfer model (Conway et al. 2009: 187).

References

Glenn, M., Roche, M., McDonagh, C. and Sullivan, B. (2018). *Learning Communities in Educational Partnerships: Action Research as Transformation*. Bloomsbury.

Conway, P.F., Murphy, A. Rath and K. Hall (2009). *Learning to Teach and its Implications for the Continuum of Teacher Education: A Nine Country Cross-National Study*. *Cork: University College, Cork*.