

# Foreword

Knowledge creation, recognition and use is widely held to be a key concern, not just of universities but of all work organizations in the age of “the knowledge economy”. The quest to understand the nature of knowledge preoccupied the ancients and in the West the shadow of Aristotle and the all-pervasive narrative of the Enlightenment still looms large over how we construct and evaluate claims to knowledge. Individual knowledge forms the basis for communication of information to others who will then make sense of it in the light of their own personal knowledge. For individual knowledge to be effective at work it must be shared and accepted by others. This may be problematic as individual knowledge is often unrecognized, not only by the organization but often by the individual holding the knowledge; in such cases the knowledge is “tacit” and its use within the organisation is limited. In a complex global world we are desperately in need of a different paradigm to make sense of real life problems that do not neatly fit into our traditional concepts of single-subject disciplines or multidisciplinary approaches. In contrast to the structured certainty of subject disciplinary knowledge, transdisciplinary knowledge is rooted in the messy problems of real life and is thus primarily emergent, complex and embodied. Transdisciplinarity offers us new ways to understand the modern world.

Although transdisciplinarity can be traced back to the early 1970s it has often been at the margins, is highly contested as a approach to knowledge creation within academia and has yet to make a major impact outside the confines of the university. This book brings an international perspective to bear on thinking about and through transdisciplinarity on professional development and education. The scope of the book ranges from the idea of transdisciplinarity and its applications in professional practice to considerations of pedagogy and transdisciplinary research. A distinctive feature of the book is consideration of key issues and concepts in the context of the lived experience of transdisciplinarity. The book effectively demonstrates how a transdisciplinary lens on the world can open our eyes to multiple realities and thus suggests how we might better understand the complexities and contradictions of our world. This is a challenging intellectual journey, but one which is very necessary and immensely worthwhile.

Director, Institute for Work Based Learning  
Middlesex University

Professor Jonathan Garnett



<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-11589-4>

Transdisciplinary Professional Learning and Practice

Gibbs, P. (Ed.)

2015, IX, 212 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-11589-4