

Preface

This book is about learning and knowledge as the abilities that ground appropriate responses to an ever-changing world. It is also a synthesis of many disciplines. Although the neurobiological and the cognitive perspectives frame the work, throughout, the assumption has been that learning and knowledge are multifaceted phenomena and that transgression of traditional academic boundaries is necessary in order to grasp them in their entirety.

Thus, this multidisciplinary attempt mirrors the complexity and heterogeneity of the theme. Learning and knowledge are both tacit and automatic as well as voluntary and socially endorsed processes. Any attempt to address these phenomena must cope with the risk of internally contrasting perspectives and the challenge of numerous blind spots since only a selection of academically relevant sources may be covered.

However, explaining human knowledge acquisition with the evolutionary origin of cognition in mind in an attempt to address humans as part of the biological world is worth the putative vulnerability and in some places academic weakness.

I have benefited tremendously from generous readers who commented on chapters in their areas of expertise: Gitte Balling, Simon Nørby, Cathrine Hasse and Claus Emmeche. I also wish to thank the many students who have participated in inspiring exchanges throughout the years.

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