

Action Research and New Media Concepts

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Book Review

Greg Hearn, Jo Tacchi, Marcus Foth, June Lennie
(2009): Action Research and New Media: concepts,
methods and cases

Hampton Press, Inc., Creskill, NJ., 273 pp., € 23.00, US\$ 28.50, £
19.95, ISBN 978-1-57273-867-6

Action research and new media, by Greg Hearn, Jo Tacchi, Marcus Foth and June Lennie, breaks new ground in a number of ways. It explores the new internet media using action research. At the same time it uses the new media to reach out to the participants in action research studies. Three new varieties of action research are developed and described. Ethnographic action research, as its name implies, takes an ethnographic approach to action research studies. Network action research researches community networks – the “communicative ecology” – while employing those networks as research tools. Anticipatory action research brings a perspective of foresight to action research. In their account the authors present a record of their endeavours, successful and unsuccessful. The result is a series of studies that can stand as exemplars of sophisticated, flexible, critical and self-reflexive participatory field research.

Key words: action research, participatory evaluation, new media, media studies, communication studies, communicative ecology, network action research, ethnographic action research, anticipatory action research, poverty reduction, urban informatics, community development