Reviewer: Yvonne Bain

Andrews and Haythornthwaite set out their stall in the introductory chapter noting that e-learning research is research '*into, on,* or *about* the use of electronic technologies for teaching and learning' (p.1). It is not difficult to appreciate then that this book considers a range of e-learning contexts among which are asynchronous learning networks, online gaming, mobile learning, computer-supported collaborative learning and digital video in the curriculum.

The book has contributions from 34 researchers in the field of e-learning including for example Gráinne Conole, Linda Harasim, Star Roxanne Hiltz and the editors of the book, Richard Andrews and Caroline Haythornthwaite, names with which you may well already be familiar if you have an interest in e-learning.   It has 23 chapters which are mostly suitably structured into five parts:

> I: Contexts for researching e-Learning; II: Theory; III: Policy;
>
> IV: Language and literacy; V: Design issues.

The general format is that each contributor considers a bank of research relevant to their focus area and raises issues for further research. This allows each chapter to stand easily on its own for reading and certainly to provide a good basis to engage with an overview of research in an aspect of e-learning. Despite the volume of the book, I would have welcomed an additional chapter at the end, or even a summary after each part, which pulled together the emerging issues, but instead I will just have to do that for myself.

You may think that the breadth of the book means that it lacks depth but, on the contrary, there are a number of pertinent issues raised within the book that encourage the reader to give greater consideration to the use being made of technology, how it relates to learning and the need for further research. The diversity of topics under consideration certainly raise issues that are worthy of consideration across the field of

e-learning. However, I did find that some chapters were of more interest to me than others, simply because of my own particular area of interest and therefore, I expect that this will be the same for most readers. For example, I was frustrated by the chapter by Morgan and Morgan, *The challenges of gender, age and personality in e-Learning*, in which they assumed knowledge about Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) codes, offering little in the way of explanation of these codes when they were referred to in relation to different research; this is not the kind of information that I keep readily stored in my head! Contrary to that, I could fully engage with the chapter by Roberts and Lund, *Exploring e-learning community in a global postgraduate programme*, in which they draw attention to the tensions created between students preferences when engaging in online discourse between those who prefer a 'conversational style' to those who prefer a longer response ('mini essay style') of interaction.

Whatever your interest is in e-learning, there will no doubt be a number of chapters of this book that will be of interest to you. But I would caution that if you are hoping to gain great insight into the research approaches for a particular aspect of e-learning, then you might be less inclined to read this.