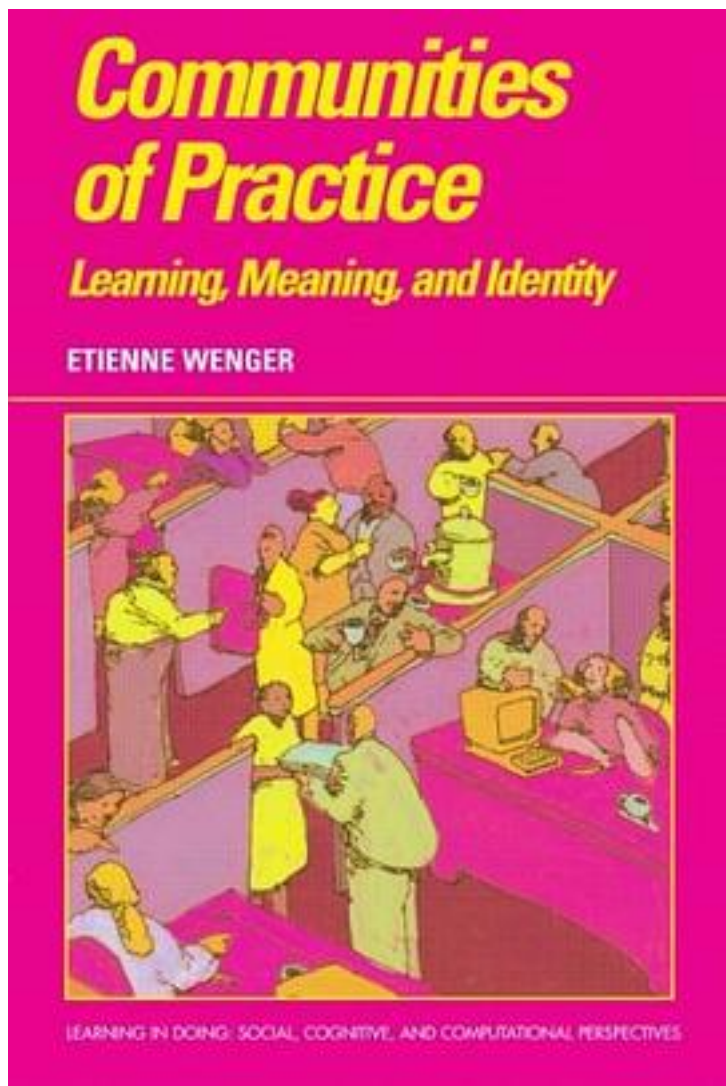


Communities of Practice



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It has long been an interest of researchers in economics, sociology, organization studies, and economic geography to understand how firms innovate. Most recently, this interest has begun to examine the micro-processes of work and organization that sustain social creativity, emphasizing the learning and knowing through action when social actors and technologies come together in 'communities of practice'; everyday interactions of common purpose and mutual obligation. These communities are said to spark both incremental and radical innovation. In the book, leading international scholars critically examine the concept of communities of practice and its applications in different spatial, organizational, and creative settings. Chapters examine the development of the concept, the link between situated practice and different types of creative outcome, the interface between spatial and relational proximity, and the organizational demands of learning and knowing through communities of practice. More widely, the chapters examine the compatibility between markets, knowledge capitalism, and community; seemingly in conflict with each other, but discursively not. Exploring the frontiers of current understanding of situated knowing and learning, this book is for all those interested in the economic sociology of organizational creativity and knowledge capitalism in general.

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目录:

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