ABSTRACT

The author, an insider researcher, is exploring community as perceived and experienced by a purposive sample of academics at a UK university, through a series of extended conversations and focus groups. She works at the institution in a new management role related to the research area, and has recently delivered a national pilot aimed at changing the culture of higher education.

COMMUNI-TEA PARTY AT THE ACADEMY

INFUSIONS: blends that reflect dispositions of the learned

You and your guests: who are you? Who might you converse with?

Conversation pieces on community: what do you say? what do you hear?

A selection to suit all palates: a varied choice to feed the mind

Food for concluding thoughts

Does ‘community capital’ exist inside higher education?

How might it be accumulated and utilised; by whom and to what ends?

What conditions are necessary in order to realise and reproduce community in a university environment?