



Acting in Anaesthesia: Ethnographic Encounters with Patients, Practitioners and Medical Technologies (Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive and Computational Perspectives)

Dawn Goodwin

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In recent years, evidence-based medicine (EBM), clinical governance and professional accountability have become increasingly significant in shaping the organisation and delivery of healthcare. However, these notions all build upon and exemplify the idea of human-centred, individual action. In this book, Dawn Goodwin suggests that such models of practice exaggerate the extent to which practitioners are able to predict and control the circumstances and contingencies of healthcare. Drawing on ethnographic material, Goodwin explores the way that 'action' unfolds in a series of empirical cases of anaesthetic and intensive care practice. Anaesthesia configures a relationship between humans, machines and devices that transforms and redistributes capacities for action and thereby challenges the figure of a rational, intentional, acting individual. This book elucidates the ways in which various entities (machines, tools, devices and unconscious patients as well as healthcare practitioners) participate, and how actions become legitimate and accountable.

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