

Download Ebook Talking About Machines An  
Ethnography Of A Modern Job Collection On  
Technology And Work 1st Edition By Orr Julian E  
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# Talking About Machines An Ethnography Of A Modern Job Collection On Technology And Work 1st Edition By Orr Julian E 1996 Hardcover

Drawing on fieldwork carried out among male motor mechanics in the Chinese diaspora of Penang, Malaysia, this informative volume explores the links between technology and the masculinization of power. Malaysia shares an obsession with modernity by way of technological development and a "can do" entrepreneurial spirit where technology is held in high esteem. Technology holds such positive connotations in Malaysian society that it is therefore a source of individual and national empowerment. Technology and modernity are therefore important factors when understanding contemporary Malaysian society. Just as there is very much a masculine ethos pervading Malaysia's spirit and belief in modernity and progress, this insightful and rewarding book focuses on technology and machines in relation to masculinity to provide an innovative, anthropological perspective of Malaysian society and the Chinese diaspora.

How can we make sense of the deluge of information in the digital age? The new science of Quantitative Ethnography dissolves the boundaries between quantitative and qualitative research to give researchers tools for studying the human side of big

data: to understand not just what data says, but what it tells us about the people who created it. Thoughtful,

literate, and humane, Quantitative Ethnography integrates data-mining, discourse analysis, psychology, statistics, and ethnography into a brand-new science for understanding what people do and why they do it.

Packed with anecdotes, stories, and clear explanations of complex ideas, Quantitative Ethnography is an engaging introduction to research methods for students, an introduction to data science for qualitative

researchers, and an introduction to the humanities for statisticians--but also a compelling philosophical and intellectual journey for anyone who wants to understand learning, culture and behavior in the age of big data.

This book explores the making of robots in labs at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). It

examines the cultural ideas that go into the making of robots, and the role of fiction in co-constructing the technological practices of the robotic scientists. The book

engages with debates in anthropological theorizing regarding the way that robots are reimagined as intelligent, autonomous and social and weaved into lived social realities. Richardson charts the move away from the “worker” robot of the 1920s to the “social” one of the 2000s, as robots are reimagined as companions,

friends and therapeutic agents.

Focused on Botswana's only dedicated oncology ward, Improvising Medicine renders the experiences of patients, their relatives, and clinical staff during a cancer epidemic.

These days, the idea of the cyborg is less the stuff of

science fiction and more a reality, as we are all, in one way or another, constantly connected, extended, wired, and dispersed in and through technology. One wonders where the individual, the person, the human, and the body are—or, alternatively, where they stop. These are the kinds of questions H  l  ne Mialet explores in this fascinating volume, as she focuses on a man who is permanently attached to assemblages of machines, devices, and collectivities of people: Stephen Hawking. Drawing on an extensive and in-depth series of interviews with Hawking, his assistants and colleagues, physicists, engineers, writers, journalists, archivists, and artists, Mialet reconstructs the human, material, and machine-based networks that enable Hawking to live and work. She reveals how Hawking—who is often portrayed as the most singular, individual, rational, and bodiless of all—is in fact not only incorporated, materialized, and distributed in a complex nexus of machines and human beings like everyone else, but even more so. Each chapter focuses on a description of the functioning and coordination of different elements or media that create his presence, agency, identity, and competencies. Attentive to Hawking’s daily activities, including his lecturing and scientific writing, Mialet’s ethnographic analysis powerfully reassesses the notion of scientific genius and its associations with human singularity. This book will fascinate anyone interested in Stephen Hawking or an extraordinary life in science. In his gripping and provocative debut, anthropologist Jason De Le  n sheds light on one of the most pressing political issues of our time—the human consequences of

US immigration policy. The Land of Open Graves reveals the suffering and deaths that occur daily in the Sonoran Desert of Arizona as thousands of undocumented migrants attempt to cross the border from Mexico into the United States. Drawing on the four major fields of anthropology, De León uses an innovative combination of ethnography, archaeology, linguistics, and forensic science to produce a scathing critique of "Prevention through Deterrence," the federal border enforcement policy that encourages migrants to cross in areas characterized by extreme environmental conditions and high risk of death. For two decades, this policy has failed to deter border crossers while successfully turning the rugged terrain of southern Arizona into a killing field. In harrowing detail, De León chronicles the journeys of people who have made dozens of attempts to cross the border and uncovers the stories of the objects and bodies left behind in the desert. The Land of Open Graves will spark debate and controversy.

Visionary designer and technologist John Maeda defines the fundamental laws of how computers think, and why you should care even if you aren't a programmer.

"Maeda is to design what Warren Buffett is to finance."

--Wired John Maeda is one of the world's preeminent interdisciplinary thinkers on technology and design. In *How to Speak Machine*, he offers a set of simple laws that govern not only the computers of today, but the unimaginable machines of the future. Technology is already more powerful than we can comprehend, and getting more powerful at an exponential pace. Once set in motion, algorithms never tire. And when a program's

size, speed, and tirelessness combine with its ability to learn and transform itself, the outcome can be unpredictable and dangerous. Take the seemingly instant transformation of Microsoft's chatbot Tay into a hate-spewing racist, or how crime-predicting algorithms reinforce racial bias. *How to Speak Machine* provides a coherent framework for today's product designers, business leaders, and policymakers to grasp this brave new world. Drawing on his wide-ranging experience from engineering to computer science to design, Maeda shows how businesses and individuals can identify opportunities afforded by technology to make world-changing and inclusive products--while avoiding the pitfalls inherent to the medium.

In November 1998, millions of television viewers watched as Thomas Youk died. Suffering from the late stages of Lou Gehrig's disease, Youk had called upon infamous Michigan pathologist Dr. Jack Kevorkian to help end his life on his own terms. After delivering the videotape to 60 Minutes, Kevorkian was arrested and convicted of manslaughter, despite the fact that Youk's family firmly believed that the ending of his life qualified as a good death. Death is political, as the controversies surrounding Jack Kevorkian and, more recently, Terri Schiavo have shown. While death is a natural event, modern end-of-life experiences are shaped by new medical, demographic, and cultural trends. People who are dying are kept alive, sometimes against their will or the will of their family, with powerful medications, machines, and "heroic measures." Current research on end-of-life issues is substantial, involving many fields.

Beyond the Good Death takes an anthropological approach, examining the changes in our concept of death over the last several decades. As author James W. Green determines, the attitudes of today's baby boomers differ greatly from those of their parents and grandparents, who spoke politely and in hushed voices of those who had "passed away." Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, in the 1960s, gave the public a new language for speaking openly about death with her "five steps of dying." If we talked more about death, she emphasized, it would become less fearful for everyone. The term "good death" reentered the public consciousness as narratives of AIDS, cancer, and other chronic diseases were featured on talk shows and in popular books such as the best-selling Tuesdays with Morrie. Green looks at a number of contemporary secular American death practices that are still informed by an ancient religious ethos. Most important, Beyond the Good Death provides an interpretation of the ways in which Americans react when death is at hand for themselves or for those they care about.

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Just as newspapers do not, typically, engage with the ordinary experiences of people's daily lives, so organizational studies has also tended largely to ignore the humdrum, everyday experiences of people working in organizations. However, ethnographic approaches provide in-depth and up-close understandings of how the 'everyday-ness' of work is organized and how, in turn, work itself organizes people and the societies they inhabit. Organizational Ethnography brings contributions

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from leading scholars in organizational studies that serve to unpack an ethnographic perspective on organizations and organizational research. The authors explore the particular problems faced by organizational ethnographers, including: - questions of gaining access to research sites within organizations; - the many styles of writing organizational ethnography; - the role of friendship relations in the field; - problems of distance and closeness; - the doing of at-home ethnography; - ethical issues; - standards for evaluating ethnographic work. This book is a vital resource for organizational scholars and students doing or writing ethnography in the fields of business and management, public administration, education, health care, social work, or any related field in which organizations play a role.

Shows how Deleuze's philosophy is shaking up research in the humanities and social sciences. Deleuzian thinking is having a significant impact on research practices in the Social Sciences not least because one of its key implications is the demand to break down the false divide between theory and practice. This book brings together international academics from a range of Social Science and Humanities disciplines to reflect on how Deleuze's philosophy is opening up and shaping methodologies and practices of empirical research.

Recent decades have seen a dramatic shift away from social forms of gambling played around roulette wheels and card tables to solitary gambling at electronic terminals. Slot machines, revamped by ever more compelling digital and video technology, have unseated traditional casino games as the gambling industry's

revenue mainstay. *Addiction by Design* takes readers into the intriguing world of machine gambling, an increasingly popular and absorbing form of play that blurs the line between human and machine, compulsion and control, risk and reward. Drawing on fifteen years of field research in Las Vegas, anthropologist Natasha Dow Schüll shows how the mechanical rhythm of electronic gambling pulls players into a trance-like state they call the "machine zone," in which daily worries, social demands, and even bodily awareness fade away. Once in the zone, gambling addicts play not to win but simply to keep playing, for as long as possible--even at the cost of physical and economic exhaustion. In continuous machine play, gamblers seek to lose themselves while the gambling industry seeks profit. Schüll describes the strategic calculations behind game algorithms and machine ergonomics, casino architecture and "ambiance management," player tracking and cash access systems--all designed to meet the market's desire for maximum "time on device." Her account moves from casino floors into gamblers' everyday lives, from gambling industry conventions and Gamblers Anonymous meetings to regulatory debates over whether addiction to gambling machines stems from the consumer, the product, or the interplay between the two. *Addiction by Design* is a compelling inquiry into the intensifying traffic between people and machines of chance, offering clues to some of the broader anxieties and predicaments of contemporary life. At stake in Schüll's account of the intensifying traffic between people and machines of chance is a blurring of the line



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between design and experience, profit and loss, control and compulsion.

This is a story of how work gets done. It is also a study of how field service technicians talk about their work and how that talk is instrumental in their success. In his innovative ethnography, Julian E. Orr studies the people who repair photocopiers and shares vignettes from their daily lives. He characterizes their work as a continuous highly skilled improvisation within a triangular relationship of technician, customer, and machine. The work technicians do encompasses elements not contained in the official definition of the job yet vital to its success. Orr's analysis of the way repair people talk about their work reveals that talk is, in fact, a crucial dimension of their practice. Diagnosis happens through a narrative process, the creation of a coherent description of the troubled machine. The descriptions become the basis for technicians' discourse about their experience, and the circulation of stories among the technicians is the principal means by which they stay informed of the developing subtleties of machine behavior. Orr demonstrates that technical knowledge is a socially distributed resource stored and diffused primarily through an oral culture. Based on participant observation with copier repair technicians in the field and strengthened by Orr's own years as a technician, this book explodes numerous myths about technicians and suggests how technical work differs from other kinds of employment. Does anthropology have more to offer than just its texts? In this timely and remarkable book, Stuart Kirsch shows how anthropology can—and why it should—become more

engaged with the problems of the world. Engaged Anthropology draws on the author's experiences working with indigenous peoples fighting for their environment, land rights, and political sovereignty. Including both short interventions and collaborations spanning decades, it recounts interactions with lawyers and courts, nongovernmental organizations, scientific experts, and transnational corporations. This unflinchingly honest account addresses the unexamined "backstage" of engaged anthropology. Coming at a time when some question the viability of the discipline, the message of this powerful and original work is especially welcome, as it not only promotes a new way of doing anthropology, but also compellingly articulates a new rationale for why anthropology matters.

A rich and fascinating ethnography of domestic architecture and activities among the high caste Chhetris of Kholagaun in Nepal, this book focuses on the spatial organization, everyday activities and ritual performances that generate and display Chhetri houses as 'mandalas', sacred diagrams that are both maps of the cosmos and machines for revelation. Describing the orientation and layout of the Chhetri house and surrounding compound; it shows how the orientation and distribution of everyday social activities with the domestic mandala shape people's experience of the enigmas of their lifeworld as householders; and analyses the double significance of rituals that take place in the domestic mandala. By treating the Nepali house as more than just the background of people's everyday life, the author reveals the Chhetri everyday lifeworld as a revelation of Hindu

tantric cosmology, its enigmatic illusion, and the path to liberation from it. The themes addressed in the book make a unique contribution to the fields of anthropology, architecture and human geography.

Financial collapses—whether of the junk bond market, the Internet bubble, or the highly leveraged housing market—are often explained as the inevitable result of market cycles: What goes up must come down. In *Liquidated*, Karen Ho punctures the aura of the abstract, all-powerful market to show how financial markets, and particularly booms and busts, are constructed. Through an in-depth investigation into the everyday experiences and ideologies of Wall Street investment bankers, Ho describes how a financially dominant but highly unstable market system is understood, justified, and produced through the restructuring of corporations and the larger economy. Ho, who worked at an investment bank herself, argues that bankers' approaches to financial markets and corporate America are inseparable from the structures and strategies of their workplaces. Her ethnographic analysis of those workplaces is filled with the voices of stressed first-year associates, overworked and alienated analysts, undergraduates eager to be hired, and seasoned managing directors. Recruited from elite universities as “the best and the brightest,” investment bankers are socialized into a world of high risk and high reward. They are paid handsomely, with the understanding that they may be let go at any time. Their workplace culture and networks of privilege create the perception that job insecurity builds character, and employee liquidity results in smart, efficient business.

Based on this culture of liquidity and compensation practices tied to profligate deal-making, Wall Street investment bankers reshape corporate America in their own image. Their mission is the creation of shareholder value, but Ho demonstrates that their practices and assumptions often produce crises instead. By connecting the values and actions of investment bankers to the construction of markets and the restructuring of U.S. corporations, *Liquidated* reveals the particular culture of Wall Street often obscured by triumphalist readings of capitalist globalization.

In this eloquently written volume Michael Agar expands the premise set forth in his very popular work *The Professional Stranger*. *Speaking of Ethnography* challenges the assumption that conventional scientific procedures are appropriate for the study of human affairs. Agar's work is informed by a hermeneutic and phenomenological tradition, in which he questions the researcher's own taken-for-granted procedures.

This original, field-changing collection explores the plasticity and unfinishedness of human subjects and lifeworlds, advancing the conceptual terrain of an anthropology of becoming. People's becomings trouble and exceed ways of knowing and acting, producing new possibilities for research, methodology, and writing. The contributors creatively bridge ethnography and critical theory in a range of worlds on the edge, from war and its aftermath, economic transformation, racial inequality, and gun violence to religiosity, therapeutic markets, animal rights activism, and abrupt environmental change. Defying totalizing analytical schemes, these visionary

essays articulate a human science of the uncertain and unknown and restore a sense of movement and possibility to ethics and political practice. Unfinished invites readers to consider the array of affects, ideas, forces, and objects that shape contemporary modes of existence and future horizons, opening new channels for critical thought and creative expression. Contributors. Lucas Bessire, João Biehl, Naisargi N. Dave, Elizabeth A. Davis, Michael M. J. Fischer, Angela Garcia, Peter Locke, Adriana Petryna, Bridget Purcell, Laurence Ralph, Lilia M. Schwarcz

In 1900, Sheffield was the tenth largest city in the world. Cutlery "made in Sheffield" was used across the globe, and the city built armored plate for the navy in the run-up to the First World War. Today, however, Sheffield's derelict Victorian shop floors and industrial buildings are hidden behind new leisure developments and shopping centers. Based on an extended period of research in two local steel factories, this book combines a lively, descriptive account with a wide-ranging critique of post-industrial capitalism. Its central argument is that recent government attempts to engineer Britain's transition to a post-industrial and classless society have instead created volatile post-industrial spaces marked by informal labor, industrial sweatshops and levels of risk and deprivation that divide citizens along lines of gender, age, and class. The author discovers a link between production and reproduction, and demonstrates the centrality of kinship relations, child and female labor, and intra-household exchanges to the economic process of de-industrialization. Paradoxically, government policies

have reinvigorated working-class militancy, spawned local industrial clusters and re-embedded the economy in the spatial and social structure of the neighborhood.

"A deeply insightful book that connects the dots of the hidden systems that have subverted democracy and caused the type of desperation and anger that result in a 9/11. A book that opens our awareness."--John Perkins, author of The New York Times bestseller Confessions Of An Economic Hit Man

"Anyone interested in global economic crime should read this book."--Charmian Gooch, a founding director of Global Witness "Global Outlaws is a revealing book about a global trend whose importance is still far from being fully

recognized."--Moises Naim, Editor in Chief of Foreign Policy Magazine and author of Illicit: How Smugglers

Traffickers and Copycats are Hijacking the Global Economy "Carolyn Nordstrom's important new book takes us on a dark journey through war-torn landscapes riddled with corruption, violence, and gross inequalities.

It is a compelling study--one guided by the norms of scholarly research but also written out of deeply felt experience. A book infused by anger, compassion, but also hope."--Andrew Mack, University of British

Columbia "This is a fascinating, insightful, and important ethnographic study of the intersection of crime, finance, and power in the illegal, 'informal', or underground economy. I have read all of Carolyn Nordstrom's books, and this is the best one yet."--Jeff Sluka, Massey

University "Carolyn Nordstrom's Global Outlaws is a rare and remarkable fusion of economic anthropology and travel writing. The prose is highly engaging without being

sensationalistic. This is a timely and fascinating read for anyone looking for an on-the-ground account of the clandestine underside of globalization."--Peter Andreas, co-author of *Policing the Globe: Criminalization and Crime Control in International Relations* "Carolyn Nordstrom is the best fieldworker in anthropology, bar none. Yet again she has pioneered new fieldsites and new forms of ethnography in this book, as well as presented a new framework for viewing economics and economic power. This is undoubtedly a highly important work that sets new frontiers for anthropology."--Monique Skidmore, Australian National University

This highly original work presents laboratory science in a deliberately skeptical way: as an anthropological approach to the culture of the scientist. Drawing on recent work in literary criticism, the authors study how the social world of the laboratory produces papers and other "texts," and how the scientific vision of reality becomes that set of statements considered, for the time being, too expensive to change. The book is based on field work done by Bruno Latour in Roger Guillemin's laboratory at the Salk Institute and provides an important link between the sociology of modern sciences and laboratory studies in the history of science.

As Anna and Layla reckon with illness, risk, and loss in different ways, they learn the power of friendship and the importance of hope.

Hornborg argues that we are caught in a collective illusion about the nature of modern technology that prevents us from imagining solutions to our economic and environmental crises other than technocratic fixes.

He demonstrates how the power of the machine generates increasingly asymmetrical exchanges and distribution of resources and risks between distant populations and ecosystems, and thus an increasingly polarized world order. The author challenges us to reconceptualize the machine—'industrial technomass'—as a species of power and a problem of culture. He shows how economic anthropology has the tools to deconstruct the concepts of production, money capital, and market exchange, and to analyze capital accumulation as a problem at the very interface of the natural and social sciences. His analysis provides an alternative understanding of economic growth and technological development. Hornborg's work is essential for researchers in anthropology, human ecology, economics, political economy, world-systems theory, environmental justice, and science and technology studies. Find out more about the author at the Lund University, Sweden web site.

If machine learning transforms the nature of knowledge, does it also transform the practice of critical thought? Machine learning—programming computers to learn from data—has spread across scientific disciplines, media, entertainment, and government. Medical research, autonomous vehicles, credit transaction processing, computer gaming, recommendation systems, finance, surveillance, and robotics use machine learning.

Machine learning devices (sometimes understood as scientific models, sometimes as operational algorithms) anchor the field of data science. They have also become mundane mechanisms deeply embedded in a variety of



systems and gadgets. In contexts from the everyday to the esoteric, machine learning is said to transform the nature of knowledge. In this book, Adrian Mackenzie investigates whether machine learning also transforms the practice of critical thinking. Mackenzie focuses on machine learners—either humans and machines or human-machine relations—situated among settings, data, and devices. The settings range from fMRI to Facebook; the data anything from cat images to DNA sequences; the devices include neural networks, support vector machines, and decision trees. He examines specific learning algorithms—writing code and writing about code—and develops an archaeology of operations that, following Foucault, views machine learning as a form of knowledge production and a strategy of power. Exploring layers of abstraction, data infrastructures, coding practices, diagrams, mathematical formalisms, and the social organization of machine learning, Mackenzie traces the mostly invisible architecture of one of the central zones of contemporary technological cultures. Mackenzie's account of machine learning locates places in which a sense of agency can take root. His archaeology of the operational formation of machine learning does not unearth the footprint of a strategic monolith but reveals the local tributaries of force that feed into the generalization and plurality of the field. In an era when people live longer and want (or need) to work past the traditional retirement age, the Vita Needle Company of Needham, Massachusetts, provides inspiration and important lessons about the value of older workers. Vita Needle is a family-owned factory that

was founded in 1932 and makes needles, stainless steel tubing and pipes, and custom fabricated parts. As part of its unusual business model, the company seeks out older workers; the median age of the employees is seventy-four. In *Retirement on the Line*, Caitrin Lynch explores what this unusual company's commitment to an elderly workforce means for the employer, the workers, the community, and society more generally. Benefiting from nearly five years of fieldwork at Vita Needle, Lynch offers an intimate portrait of the people who work there, a nuanced explanation of the company's hiring practices, and a cogent analysis of how the workers' experiences can inform our understanding of aging and work in the twenty-first century. As an in-depth study of a singular workplace, rooted in the unique insights of an anthropologist who specializes in the world of work, this book provides a sustained focus on values and meanings-with profound consequences for the broader assumptions our society has about aging and employment.

*Making Homes: Anthropology and Design* is a strong addition to the emerging field of design anthropology. Based on the latest scholarship and practice in the social sciences as well as design, this interdisciplinary text introduces a new design ethnography which offers unique and original approaches to research and intervention in the home. Presenting a coherent theoretical and methodological framework for both ethnographers and designers, the authors examine 'hot' topics – ranging from movements and mobilities to im/material environments, to digital culture – and confront the challenges of a research and design environment which seeks to bring about the changes required for a sustainable,

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resilient, 'safe', and comfortable future. Written by leading experts in the field, the book draws on real-life examples from a wide range of international projects developed by the authors, other researchers, and designers. Illustrations throughout help to convey the methods and research visually. Readers will also have access to a related website which follows the authors' ongoing research and includes video and written narrative examples of ethnographic research in the home. Transforming current understandings of the home, this is an essential read for students and researchers in fields such as design, anthropology, human geography, sociology, and media and communication studies.

'This is an excellent resource for those interested in studying organizations in both formal and informal contexts' - Choice  
Taking readers through the practical history of ethnography from its anthropological origins through to its use in a ever-widening variety of organizational, academic and business contexts, this book covers the whole research project process, starting with research design, and dealing with such practical issues as gaining access, note-taking, project management, analysing one's data and negotiating an exit strategy. It is highly practical and incorporates a range of case studies, illustrating organisational ethnography at work. This book is an invaluable resource for anyone wanting to plan and conduct their own ethnographic, observational or participant observational research in an organizational context, whatever their level of experience and regardless of whether they are studying a business organization or other types of organization such as schools and hospitals.

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During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, writers and anthropologists believed that the world's primitive races were on the brink of extinction. They also believed that films, photographs, and phonographic recordings—modern media in their technological infancy—could capture lasting relics of primitive life before it vanished into obscurity. For many Americans, the promise of media and the problem of race were inextricably linked. While professional ethnologists tried out early recording machines to preserve the sounds of authentic indigenous cultures, photographers and filmmakers hauled newfangled equipment into remote corners of the globe to document rituals and scenes that seemed destined to vanish forever. In *Savage Preservation*, Brian Hochman shows how widespread interest in recording vanishing races and disappearing cultures influenced audiovisual innovation, experimentation, and use in the United States. Drawing extensively on seldom-seen archival sources—from phonetic alphabets and sign language drawings to wax cylinder recordings and early color photographs—Hochman uncovers the parallel histories of ethnography and technology in the turn-of-the-century period. While conventional wisdom suggests that media technologies work mostly to produce ideas about race, *Savage Preservation* reveals that the reverse has also been true. During this period, popular conceptions of race constructed the authority of new media technologies as reliable archives of the real. Brimming with nuanced critical insights and unexpected historical connections, *Savage Preservation* offers a new model for thinking about race and media in the American context—and a fresh take on a period of accelerated technological change that closely resembles our own.

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Respecifying Lab Ethnography delivers the first ethnomethodological study of current experimental physics in action, describing the disciplinary orientation of lab work and exploring the discipline in its social order, formal stringency and skilful performance - in situ and in vivo. Drawing upon extensive participant observation, this book articulates and draws upon two major strands of ethnomethodological inquiry: reflexive ethnography and video analysis. In bringing together these two approaches, which have hitherto existed in parallel, Respecifying Lab Ethnography introduces a practice-based video analysis. In doing so, the book recasts conventional distinctions to shed fresh light on methodological issues surrounding the descriptive investigation of social practices more broadly. An engaged and innovative study of the encountered worksite, this book will appeal not only to sociologists with interests in ethnomethodology and the sociology of work, but also to scholars of science and technology studies and those working in the fields of ethnography and social science methodology.

Giants, cannibals and other monsters were a regular feature of Renaissance illustrated maps, inhabiting the Americas alongside other indigenous peoples. In a new approach to views of distant peoples, Surekha Davies analyzes this archive alongside prints, costume books and geographical writing. Using sources from Iberia, France, the German lands, the Low Countries, Italy and England, Davies argues that mapmakers and viewers saw these maps as careful syntheses that enabled viewers to compare different peoples. In an age when scholars, missionaries, native peoples and colonial officials debated whether New World inhabitants could – or should – be converted or enslaved, maps were

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uniquely suited for assessing the impact of environment on bodies and temperaments. Through innovative interdisciplinary methods connecting the European Renaissance to the Atlantic world, Davies uses new sources and questions to explore science as a visual pursuit, revealing how debates about the relationship between humans and monstrous peoples challenged colonial expansion.

This book of essays brings together his latest ideas on filming, documentary, anthropology and the art of cinema, based on his practice as an award-winning maker of ethnographic films.

In *Meanings of Maple*, Michael A. Lange provides a cultural analysis of maple syrup making, known in Vermont as sugaring, to illustrate how maple syrup as both process and product is an aspect of cultural identity. Readers will go deep into a Vermont sugar bush and its web of plastic tubes, mainline valves, and collection tanks. They will visit sugarhouses crammed with gas evaporators and reverse-osmosis machines. And they will witness encounters between sugar makers and the tourists eager to invest Vermont with mythological fantasies of rural simplicity. So much more than a commodity study, *Meanings of Maple* frames a new approach for evaluating the broader implications of iconic foodways, and it will animate conversations in food studies for years to come.

Over the past two decades, Latin America has seen an explosion of experiments with autonomy, as people across the continent express their refusal to be absorbed by the logic and order of neoliberalism. The autonomous movements of the twenty-first century are marked by an unprecedented degree of interconnection, through their use of digital tools and their insistence on the importance of producing knowledge about their practices through strategies of self-

representation and grassroots theorization. The Book in Movement explores the reinvention of a specific form of media: the print book. Magalí Rabasa travels through the political and literary underground of cities in Mexico, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile to explore the ways that autonomous politics are enacted in the production and circulation of books. Based on ethnographic research among militias in Sierra Leone and Liberia, Danny Hoffman considers how young men are made available for violent labor on battlefields and in dangerous unregulated industries.

With its infamously packed cars and disciplined commuters, Tokyo's commuter train network is one of the most complex technical infrastructures on Earth. In *An Anthropology of the Machine*, Michael Fisch provides a nuanced perspective on how Tokyo's commuter train network embodies the lived realities of technology in our modern world. Drawing on his fine-grained knowledge of transportation, work, and everyday life in Tokyo, Fisch shows how fitting into a system that operates on the extreme edge of sustainability can take a physical and emotional toll on a community while also creating a collective way of life—one with unique limitations and possibilities. *An Anthropology of the Machine* is a creative ethnographic study of the culture, history, and experience of commuting in Tokyo. At the same time, it is a theoretically ambitious attempt to think through our very relationship with technology and our possible ecological futures. Fisch provides an unblinking glimpse into what it might be like to inhabit a future in which more and more of our infrastructure—and the planet itself—will have to operate beyond capacity to accommodate our ever-growing population.

"Ever since the creators of the animated television show *South Park* turned their lovingly sardonic gaze on the massively multiplayer online game *World of Warcraft* for an

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entire episode, WoW's status as an icon of digital culture has been secure. My Life as a Night Elf Priest digs deep beneath the surface of that icon to explore the rich particulars of the World of Warcraft player's experience." —Julian Dibbell, Wired

"World of Warcraft is the best representative of a significant new technology, art form, and sector of society: the theme-oriented virtual world. Bonnie Nardi's pioneering transnational ethnography explores this game both sensitively and systematically using the methods of cultural anthropology and aesthetics with intensive personal experience as a guild member, media teacher, and magical quest Elf." —William Sims Bainbridge, author of *The Warcraft Civilization* and editor of *Online Worlds* "Nardi skillfully covers all of the hot button issues that come to mind when people think of video games like World of Warcraft such as game addiction, sexism, and violence. What gives this book its value are its unexpected gems of rare and beautifully detailed research on less sensationalized topics of interest such as the World of Warcraft player community in China, game modding, the increasingly blurred line between play and work, and the rich and fascinating lives of players and player cultures. Nardi brings World of Warcraft down to earth for non-players and ties it to social and cultural theory for scholars. . . . the best ethnography of a single virtual world produced so far." —Lisa Nakamura, University of Illinois

World of Warcraft rapidly became one of the most popular online world games on the planet, amassing 11.5 million subscribers—officially making it an online community of gamers that had more inhabitants than the state of Ohio and was almost twice as populous as Scotland. It's a massively multiplayer online game, or MMO in gamer jargon, where each person controls a single character inside a virtual world, interacting with other people's characters and computer-controlled monsters, quest-givers, and merchants. In *My Life as a Night Elf Priest*, Bonnie Nardi,



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a well-known ethnographer who has published extensively on how theories of what we do intersect with how we adopt and use technology, compiles more than three years of participatory research in Warcraft play and culture in the United States and China into this field study of player behavior and activity. She introduces us to her research strategy and the history, structure, and culture of Warcraft; argues for applying activity theory and theories of aesthetic experience to the study of gaming and play; and educates us on issues of gender, culture, and addiction as part of the play experience. Nardi paints a compelling portrait of what drives online gamers both in this country and in China, where she spent a month studying players in Internet cafes. Bonnie Nardi has given us a fresh look not only at World of Warcraft but at the field of game studies as a whole. One of the first in-depth studies of a game that has become an icon of digital culture, *My Life as a Night Elf Priest* will capture the interest of both the gamer and the ethnographer. Bonnie A. Nardi is an anthropologist by training and a professor in the Department of Informatics in the Donald Bren School of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of California, Irvine. Her research focus is the social implications of digital technologies. She is the author of *A Small Matter of Programming: Perspectives on End User Computing* and the coauthor of *Information Ecologies: Using Technology with Heart* and *Acting with Technology: Activity Theory and Interaction Design*. Cover art by Jessica Damsky

"An extremely important work. . . . It demonstrates the power that ethnographic analysis can have when directed at an examination of our own society's central nervous system."—Faye Ginsburg, author of *Contested Lives*

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Marcus, co-editor of *The Traffic in Culture*

This groundbreaking volume showcases the exciting work emerging from the ethnography of media, a burgeoning new area in anthropology that expands both social theory and ethnographic fieldwork to examine the way media—film, television, video—are used in societies around the globe, often in places that have been off the map of conventional media studies. The contributors, key figures in this new field, cover topics ranging from indigenous media projects around the world to the unexpected effects of state control of media to the local impact of film and television as they travel transnationally. Their essays, mostly new work produced for this volume, bring provocative new theoretical perspectives grounded in cross-cultural ethnographic realities to the study of media.

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