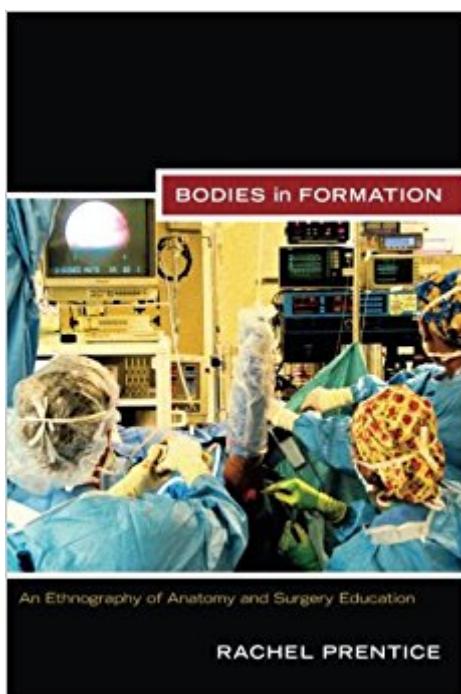


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# **Bodies In Formation: An Ethnography Of Anatomy And Surgery Education (Experimental Futures)**



## Synopsis

Surgeons employ craft, cunning, and technology to open, observe, and repair patient bodies. In *Bodies in Formation*, anthropologist Rachel Prentice enters surgical suites increasingly packed with new medical technologies to explore how surgeons are made in the early twenty-first century. Prentice argues that medical students and residents learn through practice, coming to embody unique ways of perceiving, acting, and being. Drawing on ethnographic observation in anatomy laboratories, operating rooms, and technology design groups, she shows how trainees become physicians through interactions with colleagues and patients, technologies and pathologies, bodies and persons. *Bodies in Formation* foregrounds the technical, ethical, and affective formation of physicians, demonstrating how, even within a world of North American biomedicine increasingly dominated by technologies for remote interventions and computerized teaching, good care remains the art of human healing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"*Bodies in Formation* is a superb ethnography about learning how to practice anatomy and surgery and the challenge posed by the innovation of simulator training. Rachel Prentice deftly charts how students and residents embody germane perceptions, emotions, control, and ethics, as crucial to their training as is cognitive knowledge. She argues convincingly that technologically mediated training does not, as yet, transcend the art of medicine." Margaret Lock, author of *Twice Dead*:

Organ Transplants and the Reinvention of Death" In this exceptional work, Rachel Prentice attends to the practices of surgical training and mastery, as well as the ethical problems posed by technological innovation. Given these problems, she suggests that our conceptualizations of the ethical in surgery might be productively rethought. There is no other book like this one; Prentice effectively places bodily practice at the center of questions of reason, innovation, technique, and ethics in science studies." • Lawrence Cohen, author of *No Aging in India: Alzheimer's, the Bad Family, and Other Modern Things* Bodies in Formation offers a thoughtful negotiation of the shifting and complex relationships of medicine and technology in a field where the bodies of the patient, student and practitioner are constantly worked upon and where ways of doing and forms of knowing are perpetually at stake. • (Talia Gordon Somatosphere) With adept prose that is both thorough and light on its feet, Prentice's close and careful ethnography of anatomy and surgical education both helpfully engages and innovatively advances the social scientific study of surgery and embodied learning, more broadly. • (Eric Plemons Anthropological Quarterly) One of the greatest strengths of this book is the author's use of engaging and entertaining real-life characters, along with powerful anecdotes, which help to illustrate and situate her arguments. . . . There are important things in this work for many groups of people, including surgeons and doctors (both trainees and trainers), anthropologists, social scientists, patients, and the list goes on. . . . I myself will certainly be taking lessons from this book forwards into my career and will keep a keen eye on the development of technology in medicine. • (Chris Howe Centre for Medical Humanities) Bodies in Formation is an important and unique contribution to literatures on biomedical training, the development of perception, and embodiment. Prentice expertly weaves different aspects of training into subtle but clear arguments about bodily practice and technological innovation as central to the formation of an ethical subject and to care. • (Carolyn Sufrin American Anthropologist) Bodies in Formation would serve to stimulate conversation among presurgical residents as to the experiences they are about to gain. This book would also make for interesting reading by medical school faculty, both those who take timid first year students and teach them to load a scalpel blade for the first time and those who serve as living examples of appropriate behavior, lifelong learners, and humanistic users of technology. • (Vicki L. Wedel American Journal of Physical Anthropology)

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