



## **Differences in Medicine: Unraveling Practices, Techniques, and Bodies (Body, Commodity, Text)**

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# Differences in Medicine: Unraveling Practices, Techniques, and Bodies (Body, Commodity, Text)

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Western medicine—especially in contrast with non-Western traditions of medical practice—is widely thought of as a coherent and unified field in which beliefs, definitions, and judgments are shared. Marc Berg and Annemarie Mol debunk this myth with an interdisciplinary and intercultural collection of essays that reveals the significantly varied ways practitioners of “conventional” Western medicine handle bodies, study test results, configure statistics, and converse with patients .

Combining theoretical work with interviews and direct observation of the activities and interactions of doctors, nurses, technicians, and patients, the contributors to this volume provide comparative studies of specific cases. Individual chapters explore topics such as the contested domain of fetal surgery in a California hospital, the construction of gender identity before transsexual surgery in Germany, and differences in the treatment and definition of pain by two clinics in France. *Differences in Medicine* advances earlier studies on medicine’s social diversity and regional variations to expose significant differences in the presumptions and decisions that affect patients’ lives, and marks a dramatic development in both the study of medicine and in science studies generally.

Revealing the ways in which the bodies and lives of people are constructed as medical objects by practitioners, technologies, and textbooks, this collection calls for and initiates new, more textured investigations and theories of the body in medicine and the practice of science. It will open new discussions among medical and healthcare professionals as well as scholars in medical anthropology, science studies, sociology, philosophy, and the history of medicine.

*Contributors.* Isabelle Baszanger, Marc Berg, Geoffrey C. Bowker, Monica J. Casper, Charis M. Cussins, Nicolas Dodier, Stefan Hirschauer, Annemarie Mol, Vicky Singleton, Susan Leigh Star, Stefan Timmermans, Dick Willems

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