“In this time of pandemics and apparently faceless global corporations, human service work is fundamentally important to all our lives. In this fascinating volume, two leading experts in the field bring together an array of insightful accounts of how service encounters work in the field. An essential book for anybody wanting to engage with the ethnographic realities of practitioner-client interaction.”

David Silverman, Goldsmiths, University of London

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Human service work is performed in many places – hospitals, shelters, households, prisons, schools, clinics – and is characterized by a complex mixture of organizing principles, relations and rules. Using ethnographic methods, researchers can investigate these site-specific complexities, providing multi-dimensional and compelling analyses.

Bringing together both theoretical and practical material, this book shows researchers how ethnography can be carried out within human service settings. It provides an invaluable guide on how to apply ethnographic creativeness and offers a more humanistic and context-sensitive approach in the field of health and social care to generating valid knowledge about today’s service work.

Katarina Jacobsson is Professor of Social Work at Lund University, Sweden.

Jaber F. Gubrium is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Missouri, USA.