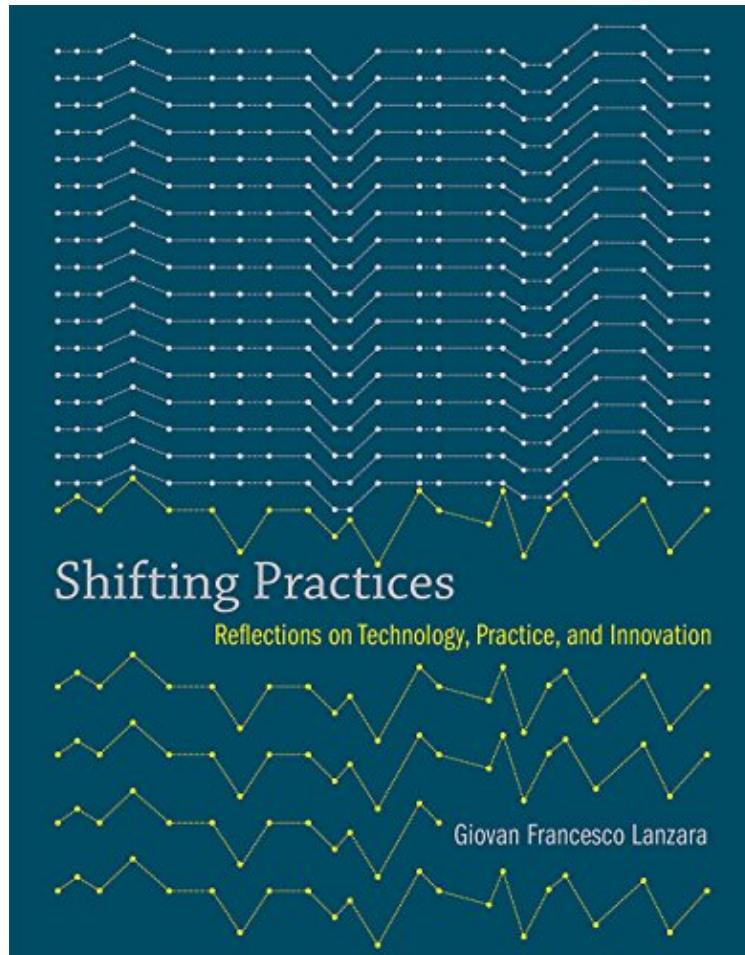


(Free) Shifting Practices: Reflections on Technology, Practice, and Innovation (Acting with Technology)

# Shifting Practices: Reflections on Technology, Practice, and Innovation (Acting with Technology)

*Giovan Francesco Lanzara*

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**Giovan Francesco Lanzara : Shifting Practices: Reflections on Technology, Practice, and Innovation (Acting with Technology)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shifting Practices: Reflections on Technology, Practice, and Innovation (Acting with Technology):

What happens in an established practice or work setting when a novel artifact or tool for doing work changes the familiar work routines? Any unexpected event, or change, or technological innovation creates a discontinuity; organizations and individuals must reframe taken-for-granted assumptions and practices and reposition themselves. To study innovation as a phenomenon, then, we must search for situations of discontinuity and rupture and explore them in depth. In *Shifting Practices*, Giovan Francesco Lanzara does just that, and discovers that disruptions and discontinuities caused by the introduction of new technologies often reveal aspects of practice not previously

observed. After discussing methodological and research issues, Lanzara presents two in-depth studies focusing on processes of design and innovation in two different practice settings: music education and criminal justice. In the first, he works with the music department of a major American university to develop Music LOGO, a computer system that allows students to explore musical structures with simple, composition-like exercises and experiments. In the second, he works with the Italian court system in the design and use of video technology for criminal trials. In both cases, drawing on anecdotes and examples as well as theory and analysis, he traces the new systems from design through implementation and adoption. Finally, Lanzara considers the researcher's role, and the relationship -- encompassing empathy, vulnerability, and temporality -- between the reflective researcher and actors in the practice setting.

This is a book Donald Schön would have been proud of: it is enviably well written, philosophically informed, theoretically sophisticated, and empirically rich. Giovan Francesco Lanzara's reflective theorizing and subtle writing add what has been missing from the pioneering work of Schön (a theory of surprise), break through unhelpful dualisms, and elevate design thinking to a new level of sophistication. The book appeals, equally, to the scholar and the reflective practitioner. A great accomplishment! (Haridimos Tsoukas, The Columbia Ship Management Professor of Strategic Management, University of Cyprus; Distinguished Research Environment Professor of Organization Studies, University of Warwick; and author of *Complex Knowledge*) Innovation -- an elusive elixir and obscure object of desire. Lanzara uncovers innovation as a swampy, ambiguous, eventful, discontinuous, drifting, entangled, discursive, metaphorical, dynamic process of bricolage in which practice is paramount. He has composed a beautifully written and wonderfully insightful book in the finest traditions of ethnographic research. (Stewart Clegg, Professor, Management Discipline Group, University of Technology Sydney) *Shifting Practices* recounts the lifelong experience of Giovan Francesco Lanzara with the challenges posed by the intrusion of radically new technologies into established domains of social practice. With wisdom, precision, and sharp analytic gaze, Lanzara reconstructs the complex fabric of action and interpretation through which professional actors relate to and assimilate into their routines and mindsets the hidden logic of technological artifacts, and the predilections these last embody. A unique, extraordinary book that carries the analytic potency of the field of organization studies into its apex. (Jannis Kallinikos, Professor of Management, London School of Economics) About the Author Giovan Francesco Lanzara is Professor of Organization Studies in the Department of Political and Social Sciences at the University of Bologna.