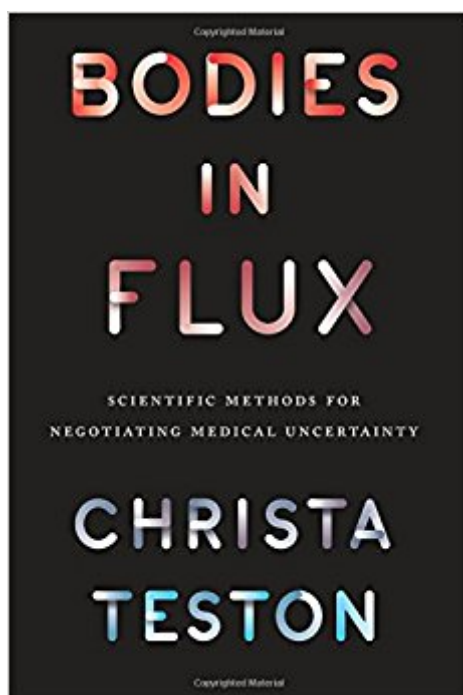


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# Bodies In Flux: Scientific Methods For Negotiating Medical Uncertainty



## Synopsis

Doctors, scientists, and patients have long grappled with the dubious nature of “certainty” in medical practice. To help navigate the chaos caused by ongoing bodily change we rely on scientific reductions and deductions. We take what we know now and make best guesses about what will be. But bodies in flux always outpace the human gaze. Particularly in cancer care, processes deep within our bodies are at work long before we even know where to look. In the face of constant biological and technological change, how do medical professionals ultimately make decisions about care? *Bodies in Flux* explores the inventive ways humans and nonhumans work together to manufacture medical evidence. Each chapter draws on rhetorical theory to investigate a specific scientific method for negotiating medical uncertainty in cancer care, including evidential visualization, assessment, synthesis, and computation. Case studies unveil how doctors rely on visuals when deliberating about a patient’s treatment options, how members of the FDA use inferential statistics to predict a drug’s effectiveness, how researchers synthesize hundreds of clinical trials into a single evidence-based recommendation, and how genetic testing companies compute and commoditize human health. Teston concludes by advocating for an ethic of care that pushes back against the fetishization of certainty—an ethic of care that honors human fragility and bodily flux.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Teston takes new materialist theory to the scene of medical diagnosis, clinical trials, and

deliberation, grappling with unruly bodies as emergent and medical practices as indeterminate and contingent. A fascinating, potent study that should be required reading for transcorporeal humans, who find ourselves dwelling within — not isolated from — flux. (Stacy Alaimo, author of *Exposed: Environmental Politics and Pleasures in Posthuman Times*) “In one of the most compelling accounts to date, *Bodies in Flux* demonstrates quite strikingly how evidence is produced as much as it is analyzed, and that rather than avoid uncertainty, we can and should embrace the contingency of bodily materialities. The book is a must-read for humanities scholars, biomedical researchers, physicians, and patients looking for alternative ways of thinking about and, indeed, actively practicing the uncertainty and potentiality of embodied being.” (Kelly E. Happe, author of *The Material Gene: Gender, Race, and Heredity after the Human Genome Project*)

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