How Transparency Works

Transparency has become a ubiquitous presence in seemingly every sphere of social, economic, and political life. Yet, for all the claims that transparency works, little attention has been paid to *how* it works – even when it fails to achieve its goals. Instead of assuming that transparency is itself transparent, this book questions the technological practices, material qualities, and institutional standards producing transparency in extractive, commodity trading, and agricultural sites. Furthermore, it asks: How is transparency certified and standardized? How is it regimented by "ethical" and "responsible" businesses, or valued by traders and investors, from auction rooms to sustainability reports? The contributions bring nuanced answers to these questions, approaching transparency through four key organizing concepts: disclosure, immediacy, trust, and truth. These are concepts that anchor the making of transparency across the lifespan of global commodities.

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Ethnographies of a Global Value

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