



Looking Within: A Sociocultural Examination of Fetoscopy (Basic Bioethics)

Deborah Blizzard

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In *Looking Within*, Deborah Blizzard examines the high-risk in utero surgery known as fetoscopy, considering it as both cutting-edge medical technology and as a sociocultural construction of patients, their social networks, and medical providers. She looks at the way individual experiences shape these procedures and how fetoscopy affects individuals (both patients and providers) on a personal, emotional level. Based on an eleven-month ethnographic study of the fetoscopy practice at a community-based hospital and further interviews with former patients, *Looking Within* offers a vivid picture of the sometimes conflicted, often desperate, and always emotional lives of those undergoing fetoscopy, and challenges current assumptions about normal and appropriate pregnancy experiences. To convey the complex reality of fetoscopy, Blizzard draws from the experiences of the real patients she interviewed for the book to present the fictional case of Melinda and Joe, taking them through the entire process, from diagnosis to decision to outcome. She then discusses the emergence of fetoscopy as an accepted form of high-risk obstetrical care, how fetoscopy programs are established at hospitals, and why otherwise healthy women consent to surgery. Blizzard examines the use of fetoscopy in single-fetus and in twin pregnancies, looking at how religion, culture, society, and medical science inform any understanding of who or what is in utero (a baby? a tumor? a mass?). She also discusses definitions of loss and success, and the narratives patients and their social networks construct to make sense of them. *Looking Within* will help physicians and nurses improve the development and delivery of fetoscopy procedures, help patients understand this new technology, and help scholars evaluate fetoscopy's bioethical, social, and cultural implications.

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