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Sommario/riassunto	There has already been much discussion and critique of the New Public Management, and the impact of auditing and inspection on professional work in schools, hospitals, local government and the police. This study, by a qualitative sociologist, uses interpretive methods to examine this new form of regulation from the inside. Based on interviews with inspectors, quality assurance managers, and auditors, as well as with professionals struggling with red tape, it offers a critical and insightful account of organisational change. The author includes vivid accounts of how quality assurance procedures and systems work in practice, conveying a sense of what is practically involved in the work of counting, measuring and managing quality, and the everyday frustrations of professionals dealing with ever-increasing amounts of paper work and red tape. This book should be essential reading for anyone concerned about the rise of this new bureaucracy and the contemporary state of the professions. It is intended to support

courses on quality assurance and the New Public Management in public administration and management. It also provides an accessible introduction for students in socio-legal studies, sociology and social policy about the effects of neo-liberalism on public sector work.
