

Cosmetic Surgery: The Cutting Edge of Commercial Medicine in America

By Deborah Sullivan



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Cosmetic surgery is big business. With demand rising, this commercial medical practice has become a modern body custom. To explain the emergence and growth of this demand, Deborah A. Sullivan looks beyond the cultural imperatives of appearance and examines the market dynamics inherent in the business and politics of cosmetic surgery. In so doing, she also considers the effect of commercialization on the medical profession.

After reviewing prevailing beauty ideals, Sullivan looks at the social, psychological, and economic rewards and penalties resulting from the way we look. Following a historical overview of the technological advances that made cosmetic surgery possible, she explores the relationship between improved surgical techniques and the resulting increased demand; she also examines the ensuing conflict within the profession over recognition of commercial cosmetic surgery as a specialty. Among the topics covered are sensitive areas such as physician advertising, unregulated practice, and ambulatory surgery, and the consequences of commercialism on medical judgment. Finally, she reveals how physicians and their professional organizations have shaped the ways in which cosmetic surgery is presented in advertisements and women's magazines that would promote patient demand.



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Editorial Review

Review

"...Sullivan makes one think very hard about the path we are all treading." - -- Sander L. Gilman, author of Making the Body Beautiful: A Cultural History of Aesthetic Surgery

"An incisive look at the medicalization of beauty..." - -- Margaret Lock, author of Encounters with Aging: Mythologies of Menopause in Japan and North America

From the Back Cover

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Sandra Davis:

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