

Media and the Rhetoric of Body Perfection

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Cosmetic Surgery, Weight Loss
and Beauty in Popular Culture



Deborah Harris-Moore

The Cultural Politics of Media and Popular Culture

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Against the background of the so-called 'obesity epidemic', *Media and the Rhetoric of Body Perfection* critically examines the discourses of physical perfection that pervade Western societies, shedding new light on the rhetorical forces behind body anxieties and extreme methods of weight loss and beautification. Drawing on rich interview material with cosmetic surgery patients and offering fresh analyses of various texts from popular culture, including internationally-screened reality-television shows including *The Biggest Loser*, *Extreme Makeover* and *The Swan* as well as entertainment programmes and documentaries, this book examines the ways in which Western media capitalise on body anxiety by presenting physical perfection as a moral imperative, whilst advertising quick and effective transformation methods to erase physical imperfections. With attention to contemporary lines of resistance to standards of thinness and attempts to redefine conceptions of beauty, *Media and the Rhetoric of Body Perfection* will appeal to scholars and students of popular culture, television, media and cultural studies, as well as the sociology of the body, feminist thought, body transformation and cosmetic surgery.

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