



Dubious Equalities and Embodied Differences: Cultural Studies on Cosmetic Surgery (Explorations in Bioethics and the Medical Humanities)

Kathy Davis

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Dubious Equalities and Embodied Differences explores cosmetic surgery as a cultural phenomenon of late modernity. From its onset as a medical specialty at the end of the nineteenth century, cosmetic surgery has been intimately linked to discourses of 'normalcy,' as well as to gender, race, and other categories of difference that have shaped its technologies and techniques, its professional ideologies, and the objects of its interventions. Davis considers how cosmetic surgery is taken up in representations of cosmetic surgery in medical discourse and in popular culture, drawing on a wide range of cultural manifestations including televised 'infotainment,' popular music, performance art, surgeon biographies, stories of patients, public debates, and medical texts. Davis critically engages with the notion of cosmetic surgery as a neutral technology and shows how it is implicated in the surgical erasure of embodied difference.

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