

When illness goes public: Celebrity patients and how we look at medicine.

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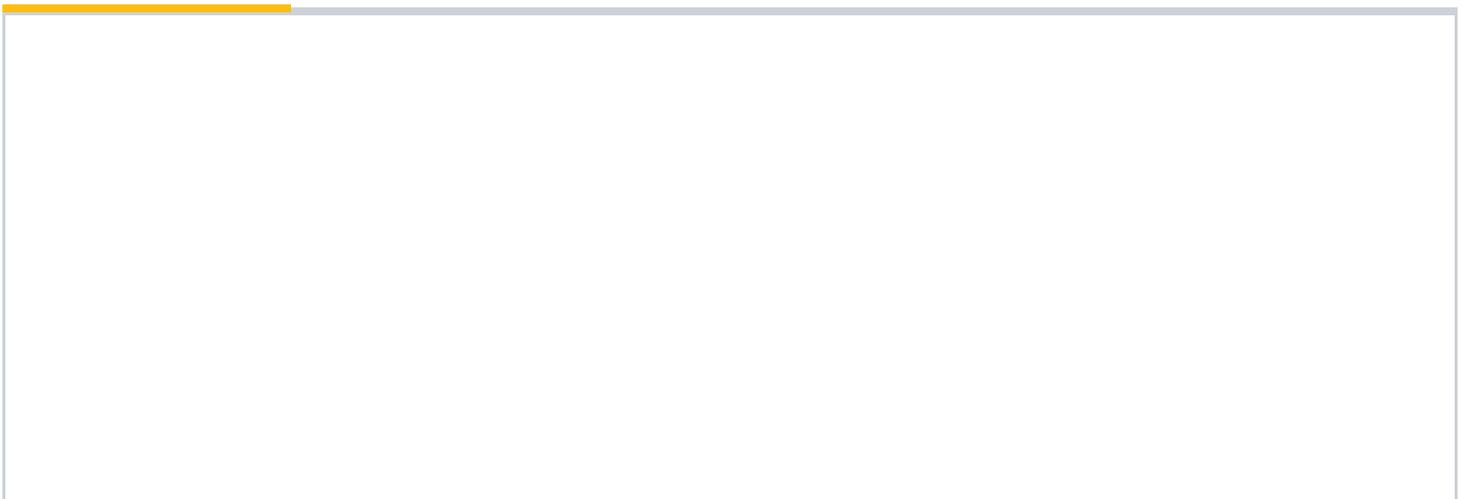
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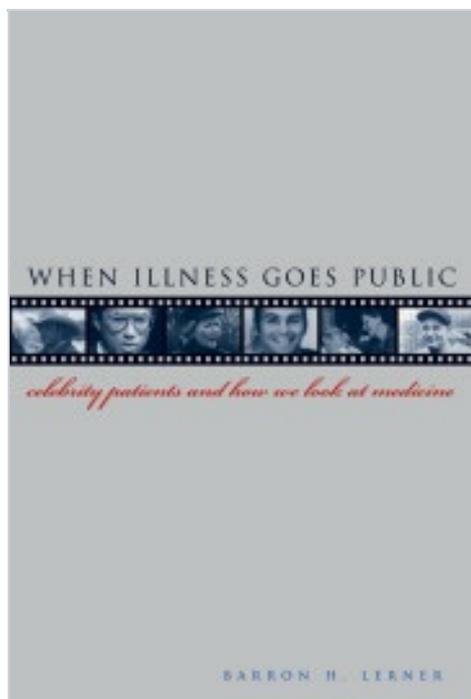


When Illness Goes
Public: Celebrity Patients
and How We Look at
Medicine



In this Book





When Illness Goes Public: Celebrity Patients and How We Look at Medicine

Barron H. Lerner

2006

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SUMMARY

Steve McQueen had cancer and was keeping it secret. Then the media found out, and soon all of America knew. McQueen's high profile changed forever the way the public perceived a dreaded disease. In *When Illness Goes Public*, Barron H. Lerner describes the evolution of celebrities' illnesses from private matters to stories of great public interest. Famous people who have become symbols of illness include Lou Gehrig, the first "celebrity patient"; Rita Hayworth, whose Alzheimer disease went undiagnosed for years; and Arthur Ashe, who courageously went public with his AIDS diagnosis before the media could reveal his secret. And then there are private citizens like Barney Clark, the first recipient of a permanent artificial heart, and Lorenzo Odone, whose neurological disorder became the subject of a Hollywood film. While celebrity illnesses have helped to inform patients about treatment options, ethical



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