



The Silicone Breast Implant Story: Communication and Uncertainty (Routledge Communication Series)

Marsha L. Vanderford, David H. Smith

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This volume examines one health issue -- breast implants -- across a series of contexts often thought to be separate -- media coverage, doctor-patient interaction, doctor-doctor professional communication, support group dialogues, public relations campaigns, and more. In so doing, it provides a narrative of how communication shapes the individual perceptions of health, government, and social policy concerning health care.

At the core of the silicone breast implant controversy is the need for people to act amid uncertainty about the health risks involved. This need to weigh action in the midst of uncertain risk characterizes a large number of health issues. The attempts of patients, physicians, drug manufacturers, and others to seek and provide both information and influence makes communication central to these issues. Consequently, the questions explored in this volume will interest a diverse group of readers. This audience includes plastic surgeons in particular, physicians in general, and anyone involved with women's health issues. As the medical profession struggles with its identity amid changes in public attitudes, government regulations, and medical practices, this volume's findings concerning media portrayals of doctors and medical devices become even more important.

Finally, this study reveals how interrelated public information and private decisions are, and how closely media and interpersonal relationships fit. Tracing one medical issue across interpersonal, organizational, public relations, and mediated forums has clearly demonstrated the multiple ways those communication channels overlap and inform one another.

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