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In this fascinating and topical beginners guide, Ellis Cashmore explores the intriguing issue of celebrity culture: its origins, its meaning and its global influence. Covering such varied perspectives as fame addiction, the 'celebrification' of politics and celebrity fatigue, Cashmore analyzes the relationship celebrity has with commodification and the consumer society, and investigates the new media and the quest for self-perfection.

Cashmore takes readers on a quest that visits the Hollywood film industry of the early twentieth century, the film set of Cleopatra in the 1970s, the dressing room of Madonna in the 1980s, the burial of Diana in the 1990s, and the Big Brother house of the early 2000s. Author of Beckham and Tyson, Cashmore collects research, theory, and case studies en route as he explores the intriguing issue of celebrity culture: its origins, its meaning, and its global influence.