

How scientists can use celebrity culture to engage public

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[Dr. Mehmet Oz and Neil deGrasse Tyson] are emblematic of the larger role now played by celebrities in public discussions of science and science policy. . . . celebrities . . .—such as Gwyneth Paltrow, Jenny McCarthy. . . the self-styled Food Babe—make science-based claims. . . much of which has little evidence to back it up. . . . we argue that the influence wielded by such celebrities is unlikely to recede. Rather than dismissing the star power, scientists should view celebrity culture as an opportunity to engage citizens.

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There are several ways to do this. First, the scientific community needs to speak out when a celebrity issues an inaccurate . . . pronouncement on scientific issues. . . . Scientists should not see their work as just fact-checking; [but] as an opportunity to engage in a discussion of the issues with the long-term goal of building trust with citizens.

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Second, the scientific community should invest in scientists who can become trusted public voices. . . .

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. . . .The rise in celebrity culture will doubtless create . . . opportunities for scientists . . . to spread evidence-based . . . ideas as part of an ongoing public discussion of science—if the scientific community is . . . willing to engage.

Read full, original post: [Don't Dismiss the Star Power](#)