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EDITED BY CONSTANCE CLASSSEN

THE BOOK OF TOUCH

This book puts a finger on the nerve of culture by delving into the social life of touch, our most elusive yet most vital sense. From the tortures of the Inquisition to the corporeal comforts of modernity, and from the tactile therapies of Asian medicine to the virtual tactility of cyberspace, *The Book of Touch* offers excursions into a sensory territory both foreign and familiar. How are masculine and feminine identities shaped by touch? What are the tactile experiences of the blind, or the autistic?



How is touch developed differently across cultures? What are the boundaries of pain and pleasure? Is there a politics of touch? Bringing together classic writings and new work, *The Book of Touch* is an essential guide for anyone interested in the body, the senses and the experiential world.

Constance Classen is the author of *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and Across Cultures*, and *The Color of Angels: Cosmology, Gender and the Aesthetic Imagination*, among other works.

'This encyclopedic collection of writings on touch places the subject at the very centre of culture, sociality and technology.'

Chris Shilling, *University of Portsmouth*

'*The Book of Touch* provides a fulfilling and imaginative traversal of the many landscapes of touch. Constance Classen's deft introductions provide both context for, and commentary on, a constellation of texts – academic and literary, historical and contemporary – whose appearance makes a major contribution to the burgeoning study of the senses.'

Tim Barringer, *Yale University*

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