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Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity (Series Q)



Synopsis

A pioneer in queer theory and literary studies, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick brings together for the first time in *Touching Feeling* her most powerful explorations of emotion and expression. In essays that show how her groundbreaking work in queer theory has developed into a deep interest in affect, Sedgwick offers what she calls "tools and techniques for nondualistic thought," in the process touching and transforming such theoretical discourses as psychoanalysis, speech-act theory, Western Buddhism, and the Foucauldian "hermeneutics of suspicion." In prose sometimes somber, often high-spirited, and always accessible and moving, *Touching Feeling* interrogates "through virtuoso readings of works by Henry James, J. L. Austin, Judith Butler, the psychologist Silvan Tomkins and others" emotion in many forms. What links the work of teaching to the experience of illness? How can shame become an engine for queer politics, performance, and pleasure? Is sexuality more like an affect or a drive? Is paranoia the only realistic epistemology for modern intellectuals? Ultimately, Sedgwick's unfashionable commitment to the truth of happiness propels a book as open-hearted as it is intellectually daring.

Book Information

Series: Series Q

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Duke University Press Books (January 17, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0822330156

ISBN-13: 978-0822330158

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the best works of "post-" theory that I've read, and the essay on paranoia is a much-needed light in the haze of contemporary grad school education. My copy is dog-eared and dirty and filled with underlined passages / scrawled notes to myself (mostly reading "YES!" or "come

back to this"). Sedgwick's essays are brilliant, quirky, challenging, and deeply moving. I really can't find words sufficient for my experience -- this is certainly one of the most synaesthetic and vertigo-inducing books I've read in a long time. The final essay, in particular, continues to call me back.

Was it not the philosopher and critic Paul Ricoeur who coined the term "hermeneutic of suspicion" --- rather than Foucault?

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