

Introduction: Placing Touch within Social Theory and Empirical Study

Mark Paterson, Martin Dodge and Sara MacKian

Like the air we breathe, [touch] has been taken for granted as a fundamental fact of life, a medium for the production of meaningful acts, rather than meaningful in itself. (Classen 2005, 2)

Placing the Senses

So, where has touch been within social theory and spatial scholarship all this time? Where is it now and where might it be placed in the future? What kinds of knowledges are produced, validated and employed in researching the spaces of touch and the places of touching in different social contexts? These are the central concerns of *Touching Space, Placing Touch*. Before focussing on those distinctive aspects of touch, let us first consider the troubled place of the senses in general.

‘The [origin of all thoughts] is that which we sense, for there is no conception in Man’s [*sic*] mind which hath not at first totally or in parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense’, declares Thomas Hobbes in the opening chapter of his celebrated 1651 work of political philosophy *Leviathan* (1962, 21). His formulation evokes a deep, pervasive channel running throughout Western philosophy, from pre-Socratic thinking, through Enlightenment debates around rationalism and empiricism, up to contemporary Poststructuralist concerns, in considering grounds for the relationship between sensory experiences and the formulation of more complex knowledge and ideas. Hobbes’ reasoning involves building from first principles, beginning by understanding the most immediate and seemingly straightforward components of individual experience, sensation, and building from there into more complex social ideas. Hobbes claimed we were subject to two types of phenomena, in his parlance ‘sensation’ and ‘imagination’ (thought). From this, Hobbes formulates a more realistic hypothesis of a ‘commonwealth’ as the principle of a just social order constituted by an artificial collective of people. Starting from those most basic units of human experience, sensations and thoughts, a political philosophy of a fairer society is formed, connecting the individual sensorium to a larger social order.

Any accusation that sensory knowledge is trivial, ephemeral or ‘merely’ subjective therefore misses the point.

John Locke (1690) broadly agreed with Hobbes’ thesis, claiming that the entirety of human experience was derived from two sources, sensation and reflections.

‘This great Source, of most of the Ideas we have, depending wholly on our Senses,

1 and derived by them to the Understanding, I call Sensation' (Locke 1975, 105). 1
2 The assumption that the senses were the foundation of individual experience, an 2
3 epistemology of corporeal objects rather than spiritual ideas, is a tenet of empiricism 3
4 as opposed to the earlier rationalism of Descartes and others, but also consistent 4
5 with earlier medieval philosophy. The broad and pervasive consensus throughout 5
6 Western philosophy from Plato onwards is also exemplified by one of the founding 6
7 fathers of Christianity, Saint Augustine, who also starts from 'first knowledge' of 7
8 corporeal beings through the senses in order to attain higher knowledge of spiritual 8
9 matters, more permanent knowledge 'towards God' (1950, 109). Such hierarchies 9
10 of knowledge, with the preliminary nature of the senses, is clearly well established, 10
11 despite the acknowledgement that 'first knowledge' of the body and senses is 11
12 unreliable, susceptible to biases, and only a starting point on the much longer journey 12
13 to 'higher knowledge' and apotheosis. This epistemological model is unmistakable 13
14 and pervasive, illustrated and instantiated within literary tropes and high art alike. For 14
15 example the famous Renaissance painting *The Allegory of Touch* (Figure I.1), which 15
16 Harvey (2011, 393) declares represents 'the nexus between the body and its affective 16
17 life (being emotionally "touched"), the medical and anatomical understanding of 17
18 skin as both a bodily covering and a receptor of touch... and the mythological 18
19 narratives about touch that undergird early modern culture'. Further illustrations 19
20 include Peter Damian in the eleventh century, likening each of the senses to 'five 20
21 vulnerable and poorly guarded gates of a city' (in Jütte 2005, 77) 21

22 The purpose of this historical synopsis is not to construct an all-encompassing 22
23 argument or assert any grand narrative for *the* place of the senses in Western history, 23
24 philosophy or cultural life. Instead, we wish to make three substantive points. Firstly, 24
25 to foreground and contest the historical pervasiveness of a model of thinking that 25
26 tries to bypass the importance of immanent sensory knowledges in order to assert 26
27 the superiority of 'higher' wisdom, or transcendent truths. Secondly, to contest any 27
28 unitary or easily universalistic conception of 'place', 'sense' or 'touch' that such a 28
29 template might assume, signalled by the diversity of topics and approaches within 29
30 this edited collection. The contributors to *Touching Space, Placing Touch* derive 30
31 their approaches from cultural geography, art history, psychotherapy, social theory, 31
32 empirical fieldwork-based social science, and much else besides. The multiplicity of 32
33 ways that 'sense', 'touch' and the diversity of 'places' wherein these are encountered, 33
34 belies any such generalising assumption. Thirdly, and most significantly, we make 34
35 the case that the primacy and living immediacy of sensory experience does not 35
36 reside solely within the boundaries of the skin, somehow locked within discrete, 36
37 disconnected bodies. This is why the historic narrative of Hobbes' *Leviathan* is worth 37
38 reprising. The *senses* are not equivalent to the tissues and cells of the sense organs 38
39 themselves, nor reduced to nerves that connect to the brain. The cultural chronology 39
40 of the formulation of a 'sensorium' necessitates that the senses are ineluctably 40
41 social: felt individually, but also *always* shared intersubjectively. A sensorium is 41
42 the sum of an organism's perception, the seat of sensation, and 'the subject's way 42
43 of coordinating all the body's perceptual and proprioceptive signals as well as the 43
44 changing sensory envelope of the self' (Jones 2007, 8). Although physiologically 44



Figure I.1 *The Allegory of Touch*, painted by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Peter Paul Rubens (Ca. 1617; oil on panel 65cm x 110 cm)

Source: courtesy of Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

located within an individual body, its operation is continually shifting and culturally variable. As Hobbes and others have detailed, complex knowledges originate from the position that the sense modalities are a necessary prerequisite for experiences of embodied consciousness and are the principal source of contact with the world for corporeal beings. By implication, then, there are congruent slippages in that consciousness as a result of sensory impairments of any kind (say from processes of aging, illness or genetic inheritance), and humans are always open to experiencing the social and spatial world differently as a result.

Yet often there remains a tendency to take the senses as given, or somehow superfluous or inconsequential, especially in social science scholarship. The senses are relegated to common sense or parcelled off as automatic biological function, unworthy of more detailed social exploration and nuanced explanation. While so central to the embodied experience of researcher and researched alike, there has been surprisingly little reflexivity about the role of the senses in the actual practice of *doing* research in the social sciences. As we shall see, in a post-embodiment scholarship alert to ‘more-than representational’ sensibilities in recent years, a renewed interest and concern with the senses, including touch, is beginning, part of a collective upsurge of research across several disciplines.

An increased attention to touch and its modalities necessarily results in a widening array of attendant research questions. For example, should touch be researched as a unitary sense or modality? Is touch straightforwardly cutaneous, a surface feeling upon the skin, and how far might it be related to other, less distinct, sensations within the body? ‘Things are quite simple until a scientist comes along and complicates

1 them’, the biologist Otto Lowenstein (1966, 121) once declared, having conducted 1
 2 pioneering laboratory experiments on the pressure sensors in different animals in 2
 3 the 1950s and 1960s. The way that the senses of balance, movement and bodily 3
 4 orientation in space were constituted through sensing cells and organs distributed 4
 5 throughout the body of animals and humans alike, owes much to his research. 5
 6 Another way of characterising such research was, as Lowenstein (1966, 121) 6
 7 himself pithily put it, in converting ‘common sense’ to ‘uncommon sense’, yet with 7
 8 far-reaching and unforeseen implications. Within experimental biology and the near- 8
 9 contemporary field of Gibson’s (e.g. 1968) ecological psychology, the role of detailed 9
 10 laboratory findings in challenging and contesting previously straightforward and 10
 11 long held philosophical assumptions about the sensory modalities, their neurological 11
 12 pathways and information channels was crucial. In a similar vein, an agenda for 12
 13 rethinking divisions between sensory modalities and for grasping how they have 13
 14 been historically, culturally and socially formed is increasingly a concern for current 14
 15 social science. We hope that *Touching Space, Placing Touch* contributes in its 15
 16 own way to this grander project, turning common sense into uncommon sense by 16
 17 questioning assumptions about the senses, their felt experience as immediate and/or 17
 18 unmediated, their interaction, their role in the perception of space, and the role of the 18
 19 social in the formation of a sensorium. As with Lowenstein’s characterisation, such 19
 20 assumptions had been largely unchallenged until recent social scientific scholarship 20
 21 came along to try to complicate them. 21

22 22
 23 23

24 **The Place of Touch and a Renewed Interest the Body** 24
 25 25

26 With the ‘turn to the body’ in social theory in previous decades and the so-called 26
 27 ‘cultural turn’ in human geography and anthropology, some claims have been 27
 28 made about a ‘return to the senses’ (cf. Paterson 2008), marked by the rise of a 28
 29 transdisciplinary field known as ‘sensory studies’ that connects developments across 29
 30 a number of academic areas and methodological approaches, weaving historical, 30
 31 theoretical, and empirical study into something rich, relevant and potentially 31
 32 revealing (see <http://sensorystudies.org> for an ongoing database of scholars 32
 33 compiled by anthropologist David Howes’ team). If the senses have previously 33
 34 been largely the preserve of biology and experimental psychology, a ‘sensory turn’ 34
 35 across a number of fields in the humanities and social sciences can be identified 35
 36 which involves the examination or re-examination of the senses according to the 36
 37 conceptual specificities and methodological limitations of each discipline. Not an 37
 38 intellectual movement as such, it is more a collation of a series of parallel strands 38
 39 threaded through and interconnecting with much larger disciplinary histories, and 39
 40 we will examine the specific story of human geography in this regard below. The 40
 41 development of book series and new journals, including *Senses & Society* (founded 41
 42 by David Howes in 2005), speak to the transdisciplinary potential of taking the 42
 43 senses seriously in the humanities and social sciences. 43

44 44

1 Yet, while there is evident promise within a transdisciplinary ‘sensory studies’ 1
2 the scope for original findings is, we believe, more questionable. This is because the 2
3 weave between the theoretical complexity necessary to do justice to human senses, 3
4 sensibilities and bodily dispositions is not often matched with the kinds of flexible 4
5 and nuanced empirical approaches required to do them justice. Moreover, the role of 5
6 the senses within academic research has not always been explicitly demarcated, nor 6
7 the sole focus of study. Sensory experience has obviously been implicit, pervasive 7
8 within research activities and therefore inherently present in some form or another, 8
9 but rarely recorded or deemed worthy of analysis in itself. Linked to this trend, 9
10 if the late twentieth century interest in embodiment was characterised by thinking 10
11 about the body as a site of signification for the politics of gender, or the production 11
12 of meaning through adornment, inscription and so on, the early twenty-first century 12
13 is seeing another blooming of interest in ‘the body’, this time as an explicit research 13
14 tool. For, despite the vast quantity written about the body across academic disciplines 14
15 in the 1980s and 1990s, very rarely was the body used intimately and reflexively 15
16 as an actual instrument for ‘doing’ the research, as not simply the focus but the 16
17 means through which social science investigation were conducted, something that 17
18 geographers Crang (2003) and Longhurst et al. (2008 and 2009) have made a 18
19 powerful case for. 19

20 Employing a cross-disciplinary approach in a post-embodiment context we 20
21 can therefore identify a burgeoning area of work that addresses individual sensory 21
22 experiences, yet which also remains conscious of the embeddedness of the senses 22
23 in society, and in the spirit of Hobbes, how a sensorium is historically formed and 23
24 socially co-constituted. Examples of some of the most compelling work include 24
25 Lisa Law’s (2001) article ‘Home Cooking’, whose ethnographic work amongst 25
26 immigrant Filipino workers in Hong Kong evoked the smells and tastes of their 26
27 cooking as an integral component in reproducing ‘home’. Yet it must still be broadly 27
28 acknowledged that there is much to do, within specific disciplines, to better attend to 28
29 such concerns and address a sensory lacuna in their historicity. 29

30 Studies of visual culture and historical accounts of vision and socio-technical 30
31 means of seeing have proliferated, most notably Crary (1990 and 1999), 31
32 Mitchell (2002) and Danius (2002), demonstrating that the scopic has enjoyed a 32
33 disproportionate amount of research interest compared to the other sense modalities. 33
34 By comparison touch remains under-explored, under-represented and marginal 34
35 across these broad categories of research. Nevertheless, an increasing amount of 35
36 work is contesting this prioritisation of the visual, what Martin Jay in *Downcast Eyes* 36
37 (1994) famously called ‘ocularcentrism’, or reconsiders the visual in relation to other 37
38 modalities through renewed approaches to art history, film studies, literary studies, 38
39 or traditional aesthetics for example. Re-examining the visual’s relationship with the 39
40 non-visual has been a concern within art history, architecture and cultural geography 40
41 (e.g. Harvey’s 2003, 2011 work on touch in art history; Pallasmaa’s architectural 41
42 theory, 2005; the “more-than visual” approach to the built environment of Paterson, 42
43 2010), thereby contributing perspectives that enfold visual *and* non-visual cultures. 43
44 In anthropology the move to consider the embodied nature of fieldwork has already 44

1 brought valuable attention to the non-visual modalities, such as the ethnographic 1
 2 monographs of Stoller (1997), Howes (2003) and Geurts (2002). While in sports 2
 3 science, Sparkes (2009) and Hockey (2006) for example are similarly connecting 3
 4 anthropology and psychology literature and attending to the more explicitly somatic 4
 5 processes involved in physical activity. By examining their disciplinary histories in 5
 6 parallel ways, establishing a corrective to a previously visual bias, or attempting to 6
 7 reconsider the relationship between the visual and the non-visual, a considerable 7
 8 amount of cross-pollination is taking place across academic fields which, in 8
 9 some cases, is reinvigorating existing debates. For example, in film studies the 9
 10 idea of haptic cinema has a hold, thanks in part to phenomenologically-inflected 10
 11 contributions from Sobchack (2004) and Marks (2002). Where technologies are 11
 12 involved, such as medicine or computer mediated communications, a shift in those 12
 13 relations may be considerable. 13

14 14
 15 15

16 **The Places of Touch in Geographical Scholarship** 16

17 17

18 Where, then, is the place of touch? Until recently, social science research that dealt 18
 19 specifically with touch and tactility was thin on the ground. Moreover, given the deep 19
 20 importance of touch in all aspects of spatial experience, the tactile senses have been 20
 21 surprisingly poorly researched by human geography. It is evident that geographers 21
 22 have quite simply and literally been out of touch. There are many reasons why touch 22
 23 is an overlooked spatial practice. As suggested above, this neglect by geographers 23
 24 is part and parcel of orientations to the senses in general. The nature of touch is 24
 25 classified as immediate, obvious or trivial, yet it is hard to encode these intimate 25
 26 sensations and their subtle meanings into representational forms that prioritise text 26
 27 and the print medium, the usual means of outputting academic research. Furthermore 27
 28 it is an under-theorised sense in geography. Perhaps, as Rose (2003) has argued, the 28
 29 heart of the geographic enterprise is historically visual, originating from scientific 29
 30 cultures of detachment and observation during fieldwork. Furthermore, the processes 30
 31 of data collection and manipulation involved in GIS (Geographic Information 31
 32 System) similarly works by abstracting data from the inevitably embodied processes 32
 33 of collecting and collating, representing it in primarily visual terms through digital 33
 34 cartography. 34

35 Given the return to the body in previous decades, the intermittent scholarly 35
 36 flirtations with phenomenology in sociology, anthropology and human geography 36
 37 in the 1980s, and the more recent upsurge of interest in the body as an instrument 37
 38 of research, whether through feminist programmes of research (e.g. Longhurst et al 38
 39 2008) or so-called non-representational theory, especially the more body-centric and 39
 40 experimental focus of Edensor (2007), McCormack (2008) or Paterson (2009), this 40
 41 is surprising. Tracing the path of touch within human geography in particular it is 41
 42 largely through the uptake of reading across disciplines, for example the influential 42
 43 work of ecological psychologist Gibson on the haptic system (1968), that Rodaway 43
 44 writes a corresponding chapter on the haptic in his *Sensuous Geographies* (1994). 44

1 Meanwhile, a niche body of related research around visual impairment, cognitive 1
2 mapping and navigation aligned some geography scholars, such as Reginald 2
3 Golledge and his co-workers, with wider literatures on blindness and environmental 3
4 psychology (e.g. Golledge 1993). It takes another leap through the decades to see 4
5 touch reappear, being loosely connected with the emergence of sensory studies within 5
6 other disciplines, but also part of the ongoing operationalisation of somatocentric 6
7 research. 7

8 Given both the historical origins of the geographic discipline as predominantly 8
9 visual survey and cartographic display and the resurgence of interest on scholarship 9
10 around the body in the 1990s it is curious that, firstly, relations between geographical 10
11 scholarship, spatiality and touch remained under-explored, and secondly that 11
12 rigorous attention to somatosensory experience in general was ignored for so 12
13 long. While touch still remains marginal in geographical scholarship something is 13
14 beginning to shift, connections between disciplinary fields interested in space and 14
15 place are occurring, and particularly fertile transdisciplinary research programmes 15
16 in health and well-being, in therapeutic spaces and landscapes (e.g. Bingley 2003, 16
17 Butler and Parr 1999), in the new performative spaces of the body and movement 17
18 through landscape, sports and tourism (e.g. Edensor 2006, Spinney 2006, Saville 18
19 2008) and elsewhere are coalescing to provide fertile ground for research in touch, 19
20 haptics and the body to take root and flourish. The more recent interest within human 20
21 geography with the affective aspects of everyday spaces and performance sometimes 21
22 invites a specific focus on the sensual and the pre-cognitive (e.g. Thrift 2007). 22
23 Much of this work moves beyond representational (visual and textual) readings of 23
24 place and environmental interaction to an interpretative emphasis on emotive states 24
25 and embodied practices. However, any so-called ‘performative turn’ in human 25
26 geography has, we believe, so far underplayed the socio-cultural complexity that 26
27 regulates touch in different places – the conventions of when, where and with whom 27
28 one can touch. How are these conventions policed? To what degree are places of 28
29 touch gendered, and how does age, culture or ability become associated with touch? 29
30 To what degree do spatial contexts for activities matter (work places, retail space, 30
31 domestic homes, etc.). Some of the new work presented in *Touching Space, Placing* 31
32 *Touch* are speaking to this. 32

33 As should be evident by now, and as reflected in the chapters brought together in 33
34 *Touching Space, Placing Touch*, we are moving away from the seeming immediacy 34
35 of an individualised cutaneous touch, moving simultaneously ‘inwards’ by 35
36 complicating ideas of sensations throughout the dispersed body, but also ‘outwards’ 36
37 between bodies and subjectivities. Touch is integral to every aspect of social action 37
38 and its symbols and meanings deeply infuse all cultures. It is the most intimate 38
39 spatial relationship between people, and a vital and subtle communicative practice. 39
40 The places where people want to touch, are allowed to, obliged to, refuse to, or are 40
41 forbidden to touch form a complex and delicately-patterned socio-spatial landscape 41
42 that is negotiated largely subconsciously. Children learn their place and where to 42
43 touch and, importantly, not touch. Furthermore, people understand and organise the 43
44 world through touch in differing ways. As Classen (2005, 1) notes ‘[t]ouch is not 44

1 just a private act. It is a fundamental medium for the expression, experience and 1
2 contestation of social values and hierarchies.’ 2

3 Importantly, the role of touch is not universally positive. Our project is no 3
4 simple-minded call for more, or better, touching practices. The inequalities and 4
5 unevenness of tactile experience materialise and are enacted within particular 5
6 places, and are accordingly processed and read within those places. We believe there 6
7 is much valuable work to be done in mapping the differentiated landscapes of touch 7
8 in some detail, seeking to highlight varying patterns of tactile interactions within 8
9 specific places and within the conduct of particularised spatial practices. The places 9
10 of touch are inevitably and sometimes powerfully experientially differentiated, and 10
11 status and social role unquestionably affects how we come into contact with the 11
12 spaces brought into being. A strong example of this is the difference between being 12
13 a nurse or patient in a hospital, involving professional touching (cf. Andrieu et al. 13
14 chapter in this volume). This offers up routes for those who want to modify space to 14
15 effect progressive social change. As an illustration of this we cite the work of radical 15
16 geographer William Bunge (1971) who sought to map the everyday experiential 16
17 landscape of children in the Fitzgerald neighbourhood of Detroit, detailing, for 17
18 example, how designated school playgrounds were haptically hostile and undesirable 18
19 for children to play on. His analysis highlights the extent of jagged objects and sharp 19
20 glass fragments on the playgrounds. He asks pointedly with respect to the ground- 20
21 level view of a school playground displayed in Figure I.2: 21

22
23 What is it that the human child in Fitzgerald actually touches? Is this a suitable 23
24 surface for human contact, or is it just cheap, easy to maintain, easy to drain? Or is 24
25 it deliberately inhuman so as to discourage after-school use? Would anyone want 25
26 to picnic here? (Bunge 1971, 155) 26

27
28

29 **Empirical Research on the Spaces of Touch** 29

30 30

31 If, as already suggested, it remains impossible to presuppose any unitary conception 31
32 either of ‘place’ or ‘touch’, any claims to ‘know’ either are indeterminate. 32
33 Consequently we believe it unwise to assume any consistency in how researchers 33
34 engage with such concepts empirically, or to impose any artificial classification 34
35 scheme. Thinking about method has, therefore, been an illuminating part of 35
36 developing *Touching Space, Placing Touch*. The social sciences as a whole have 36
37 woken up to the idea that ‘place matters’, in particular in terms of the metaphorical 37
38 and psychological dimensions and experiences of place, as opposed to rooting 38
39 our understanding of place in any concrete spatial framework. A diversity of 39
40 methodological approaches has arisen in human geography as a result, with a 40
41 growing appreciation for, and playfulness with, the situated research encounter 41
42 (cf. Hawkins 2011, MacKian 2010). In particular researchers have used storytelling, 42
43 performance and visual ways of representing their empirical encounters (see, for 43
44 example, Latham 2003, Laurier 1998, Pearce 2008). 44



Figure I.2 Tactile hostility of school playground exhibited in the critical analysis of radical geographer William Bunge

Source: Bunge 1971, 155

The nuanced socio-spatiality of tactile engagements, however, has remained less empirically interrogated. While Wylie (2002 and 2006) for example has conducted fieldwork exploring the performativity of landscapes in terms of embodied sensory experience, and explicitly acknowledges the role of the haptic in this, he is more interested in the kinetics of narrative than the place of touch. Yet, as Anne Volvey in this volume argues, touch has always been a part of what geographers do during fieldwork, but only recently has it been considered a valuable and valid source of real ‘data’, thereby opening up numerous questions about the place of touch at the heart of scholarly practice. Given the range of contributions in *Touching Space*, *Placing Touch* we might ask how the varied methodological approaches of social scientists, and human geographers in particular, could be reconfigured, adapted and extended to do greater justice to the intricacies, delicacies and contradictions of touch. Does the researcher try to measure touch itself in some way, or satisfy themselves with (often imperfect) proxies for it in the form of words and categories? Is it ethical and appropriate for academics to attend to their own haptic experiences as an undeniable part of the empirical process? As a number of the chapters in this volume begin to demonstrate, the answers to such questions are plural, but all highlight to varying degrees how attention to touch grants scholars some form of access to a subjectively-constituted interior experience and understanding not always discernible through behavioral observations. For touch lies at the interface between the perceived interiority of an embodied subject and the exteriority of

1 the world they bring into existence through actions and relations. Several of the 1
 2 authors in *Touching Space, Placing Touch* engage with the modalities of touch 2
 3 through discursive analysis without themselves touching the places they delineate, 3
 4 others openly embrace the inevitability of immediate and intimate tactile encounters 4
 5 during their empirical investigations, reminding us that touch exists in a relational 5
 6 space between those touching and those being touched. If some use well established 6
 7 interview approaches to obtain rich empirical material, as demonstrated in Jennifer 7
 8 Lea's interviews with massage practitioners, others, such as Sarah Cant, Pau 8
 9 Obrador and Elizabeth Straughan, opt for more participatory research methods in 9
 10 an effort to get closer to the place of touch in their particular research contexts. 10
 11 This, as Hannah Macpherson says, requires a bodily and sensory immersion on 11
 12 the part of the researcher which, taken against the more positivist demands within 12
 13 social science for investigative rigour in large samples and generalisable results, 13
 14 sits at odds with the way academic geography has habitually been conceived. An 14
 15 attention to one's own embodied touch therefore – either as a substantive topic or as 15
 16 an element of fieldwork experience – demands that scholars take a more involved 16
 17 role as researchers, and reminds academics of the need to consider their auto- 17
 18 ethnographic role in researching, experiencing and representing tactile senses within 18
 19 fieldwork and research dissemination. 19

20 Touch in any context can become markedly personal and private, and as a 20
 21 necessary corollary to this researchers can never be certain they truly grasp the 21
 22 meanings and sensations of those they research. Whilst interviews can be used to 22
 23 probe verbalised representations of what such encounters may embody, there will 23
 24 always be the feeling that words alone fail to grasp the non-textual kernel of tactile 24
 25 experience, that that which struggles with representation strains to be articulated 25
 26 through language. Alternatively, by immersing themselves fully in the field of touch 26
 27 as participants, researchers may feel closer to what they are teasing apart, but this 27
 28 may be re-presented only from their own embodied position and perceived social 28
 29 situation. In writing about touch research, then, the danger remains that the form of 29
 30 embodiment assumed, the imputed body of the researcher that attempts to articulate 30
 31 what touch *feels* like, is a solipsistic body, an artificial horizon, an introspective 31
 32 abyss. The extent of rigorous research about subjective and inter-subjective touching 32
 33 might thereby be constrained to rich descriptive pieces of self-reflection, always 33
 34 mired in the local, the idiosyncratic, and unable to say anything of wider significance 34
 35 beyond that very personal account. 35

36 The degree of consideration given to personal reflection by several of the chapters 36
 37 here would suggest attention to touch throws the spotlight on the researcher as the 37
 38 medium through which the reader understands. Since each personal interpretation 38
 39 of the meaning of touch and its spatial contexts is unique, this potentially leaves 39
 40 researchers grappling once more with questions of representation and authenticity. 40
 41 In qualitative research methods more generally there always remains the possibility 41
 42 of falling back upon the particular words that people choose to describe or explain 42
 43 experiences, with the insertion of lengthy and carefully transcribed quotes in 43
 44 academic analysis. However, when investigating the place of touch experience, the 44

1 inability of verbalised text or visual observations to truly convey embodied meaning 1
 2 and experience is one of the main concerns underlying the development of ‘sensual 2
 3 studies’, and necessitates an inquiry into supplementary means of, if not ‘knowing’ 3
 4 exactly, then ‘reporting’ that world. If what we claim is self-evident – namely that 4
 5 touch is about something more than the language available to describe it or the 5
 6 representations of it through words and images – where does that leave scholars in 6
 7 terms of understanding genuine and authentic experiences of touch for others? Sarah 7
 8 Cant’s chapter in this volume left the question of gender implicit, for example, and 8
 9 the reader cannot ascertain whether she danced with a man or a woman. However, 9
 10 the reader might assume that the experience would be very different for both partners 10
 11 depending on the gender of each for all sorts of personal, cultural and physical 11
 12 reasons. Whilst this does not detract from the seductive storytelling of the embrace 12
 13 and the haptics of the dance, it suggests there are other routes into touch which might 13
 14 be attempted from researchers’ own embodied positionalities. 14

15 Echoing our earlier observation that touch is not universally positive, several 15
 16 chapters in this volume highlight the therapeutic value of touch. It is perhaps not 16
 17 by chance that the subjects chosen for fieldwork involve largely non-threatening 17
 18 haptic experiences, often those the researcher themselves were already personally 18
 19 immersed within, such as recreational dancing (Sarah Cant), receiving beauty 19
 20 treatments (Elizabeth Straughan), or participating in countryside walking (Hannah 20
 21 Macpherson). Since not all touch is therapeutic, nor altogether positive, we should 21
 22 acknowledge that *Touching Space, Placing Touch* as a whole fails to engage with 22
 23 some of the more problematic aspects of touch and its associated intimacies. Whilst 23
 24 Jennifer Lea’s massage practitioners may suggest touch can help a client ‘return’ 24
 25 to their bodies, instances of touch such as an unwanted grope will instead become 25
 26 the catalyst for a disruptive experience, abruptly ripping the subject from their 26
 27 usual habitus. Completely new and potentially uncomfortable issues then irrupt 27
 28 for social science researchers, both physically and ethically, and few researchers 28
 29 would wish to open themselves to unwelcome or potentially threatening tactile 29
 30 encounters. Nonetheless, such considerations suggest there is another significant 30
 31 terrain of touching place and placing touch unintentionally omitted from this 31
 32 particular collection. While no contributor volunteered this topic, it would inevitably 32
 33 have offered significant empirical difficulties and potentially stark provocations for 33
 34 considering touch otherwise, outside of the predominantly positive associations 34
 35 within this collection. 35

36 Despite this limitation, and given the centrality of touch to our basic human 36
 37 flourishing (as shown in this collection by Bernard Andrieu et al.), sense of self and 37
 38 identity (Amanda Bingley), and ability to relate to others (Hannah Macpherson), any 38
 39 methodological advances in understanding, engaging with, and explaining touch can 39
 40 only be welcomed. Haptic experiences of and in fieldwork are a core part of what 40
 41 many academics do as researchers, and how one produces knowledge, regardless 41
 42 of the substantive topic under consideration. In acknowledging the importance of 42
 43 touch we must also accept that, as Paterson (2006, 2007), Pau Obrador (this volume) 43
 44 and numerous others recognise, there is a close relationship between touching 44

1 and feeling. To attend more fully to touch in academic research, therefore, invites 1
 2 scholars to attend to their feelings, potentially an uncomfortable and unfamiliar 2
 3 demand in many professional settings. Touching methodologies therefore prompt 3
 4 us as researchers to explore how *we* feel and how we feel *about* our subject matter. 4
 5 Viewed in this way, as Anne Volvey succinctly puts it in this collection, we work 5
 6 ‘with’ rather than ‘in’ the field, and this raises issues of responsibility which are 6
 7 rarely considered in the routinised process of ‘ethics committee’ clearances. 7

8 Above all, collectively the chapters in *Touching Space, Placing Touch* remind us 8
 9 that touch is relational, is co-produced, is co-constituted in a series of configurations 9
 10 between human and (non)human, and people and spaces alike. If in late capitalism 10
 11 the prevailing cultural and corporate tendency is, contra Hobbes’ collective 11
 12 ‘commonwealth’, towards individual insularity and atomisation, we should welcome 12
 13 an empirical stance which approaches such intertwined and intersubjective realities. 13
 14 As we continue to seek opportunities for deep connection in such a world, placing 14
 15 empirical touch centre-stage represents a collective phenomenological ‘feeling 15
 16 our way’, or perhaps a tentative ‘groping’, within this emerging, exciting, haptic 16
 17 territory. 17

18 18
 19 19

20 **The Shape of Touching Space, Placing Touch** 20

21 21

22 The twelve new chapters brought together in *Touching Space, Placing Touch* 22
 23 reflect an openness to various approaches to tactility and spatiality. The diversity of 23
 24 material, at once a measure of the liveliness of the research going on right now in 24
 25 terms of both theoretical positions and methodological approaches. Indeed, within 25
 26 human geography this research interest continues to expand and develop, indicated 26
 27 for example by subsequent conference sessions such as *Touched by Geography* 27
 28 organised by Deborah Dixon and Elizabeth Straughan at the Association of American 28
 29 geographers (AAG) conference in 2009. Since 2007, as we note elsewhere in more 29
 30 detail, work on moving bodies, on kinaesthesia and sporting bodies has grown in 30
 31 interest, alongside work more recently on visceral geographies (e.g., Hayes-Conroy 31
 32 and Hayes-Conroy 2010) which clearly complements this area. 32

33 The chapters here are not consciously arrayed in thematic order, nor grouped into 33
 34 artificially imposed categories invented by the editors. While acknowledging that the 34
 35 contributors give a diverse set of snapshot viewpoints onto tactility and spatiality, 35
 36 we do see some significant commonality in terms of the thrust of their theoretical 36
 37 arguments. We can identify six points of intellectual intersection shared across the 37
 38 chapters to varying degrees. Before summarising the chapters and identifying ways 38
 39 in which they respectively speak to these themes, we outline the themes in general 39
 40 terms. Firstly, many contributors make the case that research on the geography 40
 41 of touch has been hidebound by the dominance of the visual register as a way 41
 42 of knowing the world, and awareness of the constraints of textual inscription for 42
 43 representation. The second point advanced effectively by several of the contributions 43
 44 is the use of their own bodies, and its haptic experiences, as the central ‘investigative 44

1 tool' for generating valid empirical observation for scholarly interpretation. Thirdly, 1
 2 nearly all the chapters speak to the point, albeit in heterogeneous ways, that touch 2
 3 necessitates a relational approach and not simply the solipsistic subjectivity assumed 3
 4 in thinking about touch on the skin, or individualistically-determined isolated sets 4
 5 of sensations. Accordingly, for some contributors, the most significant observations 5
 6 within their empirical analysis is the attempt to 'map' the relational spaces in- 6
 7 between bodies that acts of touch bring into being, in some senses, and thereby to 7
 8 really begin to understand what effects touch has on people's sense of the world and 8
 9 their place within it. 9

10 The fourth theme develops from that of the third. Rooted in the haptic, and 10
 11 emerging from sensual relations with others, if the sense of 'placing' our bodies 11
 12 through touch fosters the acknowledgement that 'touch' and 'touching' is irreducible 12
 13 to superficial 'surface' or cutaneous (skin) sensations, then there is a concomitant 13
 14 need to investigate more thoroughly how the haptic realm operates not as a 14
 15 single modality, as a consistent but vague visceral 'sense' in itself, but instead is 15
 16 neurologically constituted and consciously felt in multiple ways, often at different 16
 17 'depths', or is felt as several steps removed from the bodily site or situation of 17
 18 actual or assumed physical contact. The focus on the multiplicity of touch therefore 18
 19 foregrounds a relation between an assumed interiority of the body, something 19
 20 reiterated throughout folk psychology, and the consciousness of touching and being 20
 21 touched by other bodies. The reciprocity of physical touching, the observation 21
 22 repeated from Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Irigaray that touching always inevitably 22
 23 implies being simultaneously touched, has an affective correlate. In other words, 23
 24 that profound yet indirect relationship between acts of physical touching and being 24
 25 emotionally 'touched' finds its echo in contemporary metaphors and idiomatic 25
 26 expressions, where 'touching' and 'feeling' persist as metaphorical expressions of a 26
 27 physical act, and relates to the fifth theoretical theme that several chapters consider. 27
 28 This theme identifies how physical tactility helps people connect emotionally, 28
 29 and often in novel ways. In the cases of therapeutic spaces and healing practices 29
 30 this connection might be to an inner sense of selfhood assumed by the research 30
 31 participants, but this does not foreclose alternative conceptions of relationality 31
 32 between bodies and energies, nor the multitude of ways that affective and tactile 32
 33 practices are or could be enfolded and co-constituted in various spatial contexts. 33
 34 Lastly, the sixth thread that draws several of the chapters together is a focus on the 34
 35 work of touch in the different parts of the 'body industry', and in particular on those 35
 36 who make their living performing 'body work' by selling haptic labour. This type of 36
 37 relationship between spacing touch deals most significantly with the novel ways that 37
 38 the body and tactility enters the sphere of leisure-oriented capitalism, whereby the 38
 39 body and the haptic senses enjoy a new significance. There are new modes of somatic 39
 40 address that proliferate from certain sectors of the service industry that complement 40
 41 more traditional or established therapies and care of the body. While issues of gender 41
 42 pervade each of the themes to varying degrees, the uses of tactility and the body 42
 43 within therapeutic spaces, and the asymmetrically gendered deployment of haptic 43
 44 44

1 labour within the body industry, entail that gendered labour and power relations are 1
 2 more pointed in this regard. 2

3 Jennifer Lea's work on the place of touch has focused on the spaces of health and 3
 4 care giving, especially in relation to the practices and meanings around therapeutic 4
 5 massage. Her chapter, *Negotiating therapeutic touch*, focuses on extending existing 5
 6 scholarship around the political economy of 'body work' (such as nursing, social 6
 7 care, beauty treatments) by conferring more concern for the phenomenological 7
 8 experience of the body actually doing the work. Her analysis draws upon the 8
 9 influential writing of Michel Serres (2008) which offers a complex, and therefore 9
 10 perhaps a more comprehensive, reading of the body in terms of corporeal sensations 10
 11 and most significantly the ways these emerge through social relations. Serres' ideas, 11
 12 according to Lea's interpretation, attend to the ways that touch can reach through 12
 13 the surface of the body and connect across bodies, admixing being and world in 13
 14 ongoing and unpredictable relations. This notion of 'mixing' effectively complicates 14
 15 the easy trap of inside/outside dualism around the analysis of embodied touch, 15
 16 where sensations are not created simply at the skin boundaries but arise from the 16
 17 relations. The body therefore is not a meaningfully bounded entity. The significance 17
 18 of sensory relations for understanding the world needs to be addressed, for this is 18
 19 how we become: through feeling the world. 19

20 Jennifer Lea argues that Serres' ideas of fleshy and feeling bodies, and his 20
 21 concepts of 'mixing' in particular, can help social scientists conceptualise the places 21
 22 of touch in novel ways and begin to reveal how bodies are constituted in relation to 22
 23 their spatial context. Considering how the body is not a bounded, unitary object, but 23
 24 emergent through relations including sensory ones, using in-depth interviews she 24
 25 analyses the working touch of therapeutic massage practitioners. Her analysis shows 25
 26 how language – in the form of verbal accounts of clients given when undergoing 26
 27 massage treatment – is insufficient to explain their bodies and expose the 'problems' 27
 28 residing within. The massage practitioners, in the act of 'mixing' their bodies with 28
 29 the clients', can in some way connect to a kind of demonstrable 'truth' through their 29
 30 skilled touch that is inexpressible through words. Yet, as Lea details, such truth when 30
 31 activated through touch comes laden with tensions. These tensions can arise from 31
 32 the real difficulty some clients have in dealing with the impact of a truth 'exposed' to 32
 33 their consciousness through the touch of massage. Furthermore, there can be issues 33
 34 in coping with ongoing emotional problems that emerge through mixing bodies 34
 35 because the place of touch is bounded by the time and space of the treatment room 35
 36 and constrained by the business relation that exists between client and therapist (and 36
 37 their profit derived by offering their haptic labour). The mixing of bodies in this 37
 38 way is problematic as it is part of 'body work', and cannot be freely expressed as an 38
 39 open-ended care-giving relationship. 39

40 Pau Obrador engages with ideas around the place of touch in the context of 40
 41 tourist activity, focusing on the intellectual gap in academic studies of tourism in 41
 42 understanding the sensuality of material practices. His chapter, *Touching the beach*, 42
 43 makes a case for the significance of bodies, their corporeality and the sensual 43
 44 nature of encounters with spaces, to extend tourism studies beyond its conventional 44

1 analytical concern with the optical senses and visual culture exemplified by the 1
 2 centrality of the gaze metaphor to much literature on tourism. A specific focus on the 2
 3 haptic basis of tourist activities, Obrador argues, can help to understand the power 3
 4 of their sensual experiences, pleasurable feelings and playful meanings, and thereby 4
 5 move scholarship beyond the constraints put up by the conventional focus on the 5
 6 predominantly visual consumption of places. 6

7 Drawing on earlier empirical material, Obrador's spatial context is the beach, 7
 8 a site essential to much of the tourist industry, renowned as a space offering a 8
 9 distinctive ensemble of materialities – the famed three 'Ss' of sand, sea and sun. 9
 10 The beach is also lionised as a public space for playful encounters in contemporary 10
 11 Western culture. As such beaches are interesting tactile spaces to investigate and, 11
 12 according to Obrador, their range of sensual opportunities are surprisingly under- 12
 13 researched by tourist studies. Given the ways bodies can have multiple, and quite 13
 14 often distinctive, sensual encounters at the beach, as an essential part of its broad 14
 15 ludic appeal – freedom to get onto the ground and play in the sand, laying flat out 15
 16 soaking up the sun, splashing about in the sea – clearly the beach cannot be fully 16
 17 explained by documenting the visual register alone. 17

18 Obrador looks to understand the beach by an engagement with the tactile appeal 18
 19 of sand, sea and sun, and deploys three distinct conceptual tools to achieve this. 19
 20 Firstly, he shows how a focus on the complex modalities of touch can overcome the 20
 21 isolated viewpoint, which are inherent in ocularcentric approaches. His concern for 21
 22 looking beyond vision to use the tactile senses to unlock experiences of place speaks 22
 23 directly with Anne Volvey's call in chapter 5 for attention to the more-than visual 23
 24 fieldwork practices in geographical scholarship. Obrador's readiness to engage with 24
 25 the embodied reality of sensual experiences of play and pleasure also correlates with 25
 26 other recreational tactilities such as those documented in Jamie Lorimer's chapter 26
 27 on tourist encounters with wild animals and Hannah Macpherson's discussion of 27
 28 practices of guided walking holidays. Secondly, Obrador conceptualises an expanded 28
 29 realm for the haptic, one that extends touch well beyond the bio-psychological 29
 30 feelings received at the fingertips. As he shows the sensual encounters with the 30
 31 plasticity of sand, the heating rays of the sun and the enveloping motion of the sea 31
 32 can only be meaningfully read with a 'thick' haptic perspective that registers the 32
 33 many ways touch occurs upon, within and across our bodies. The notion that touch 33
 34 is more than skin deep is a thematic current in several other chapters, including 34
 35 Jennifer Lea's discussion of the depth of feelings released through therapeutic 35
 36 massage. Thirdly, he conceptualises the value of touch for its capacity to bring forth 36
 37 the textures of places and highlight the feeling of authenticity that comes through 37
 38 the haptic sensorium. 38

39 Being able to describe more fully the textures that make places unique is valuable 39
 40 for materialistic approaches in social sciences. The focus on materialities is shared 40
 41 with Martin Dodge and Rob Kitchin examining the changing tactilities of public 41
 42 toilets arising from new technologies. Furthermore, the analysis Obrador presents 42
 43 in *Touching the beach* draws upon first-hand insights from participant observations 43
 44 on beaches and interviews with beachgoers, along with some insightful and 44

1 introspective use of his own bodily experiences. In this regard Obrador's empirical 1
 2 approach has clear methodological parallels with work presented in this volume 2
 3 by Sarah Cant on bodily experiences of tango dancing and Elizabeth Straughan on 3
 4 receiving beauty treatments. 4

5 The significance of touch in art therapy is explored in Amanda Bingley's chapter 5
 6 where she draws on influential ideas from psychoanalysis such as Winnicott (1971) 6
 7 to explore the notion that the tactile senses are a pragmatic alternative for articulating 7
 8 more than can be verbalised within a therapeutic context. Not only non-verbal 8
 9 communication, but more-than-verbal expression, Bingley believes, is the essence 9
 10 of why art therapy can be so effective in helping people recover from trauma or cope 10
 11 with serious and terminal illnesses. As she shows in *Touching space in hurt and* 11
 12 *healing*, haptic mechanics in the body can make certain kinds of 'deep' connections 12
 13 to the brain to unlock emotions and memories in ways that other senses cannot. 13

14 Bingley's empirical context is creative play and art making which is now widely 14
 15 deployed in the healing practices across many different institutional settings. Art 15
 16 therapy 'works' because touch is the deepest sense, the least deceptive, the most 16
 17 difficult to fake or be fooled by. This is because the haptic realm forms the 'ground' 17
 18 upon which everything else is built, it comes first to us as we form in utero and 18
 19 it matters the most throughout life. Tactile art activities in therapy sessions can 19
 20 simultaneously bring somatic responses and emotional feelings to the surface, to 20
 21 re-present within consciousness, helping to reconnect them with their body, which 21
 22 is often the 'problem' that a person must confront in their healing. Here Bingley's 22
 23 analysis articulates similar ideas to those advanced by Anne Volvey on the elemental 23
 24 nature of touch and how it works to unlock new knowledge about the self. The 24
 25 purposeful exploration of inner selfhood through the medium of touch is also a 25
 26 central notion in the discussion by Sara MacKian on the significance of spiritual 26
 27 encounters, Jennifer Lea's contribution on therapeutic massage and Jamie Lorimer's 27
 28 discussion of people 'finding themselves' through tactile encounters with elephants 28
 29 on volunteer holidays. 29

30 Bingley develops Winnicott's notion that touch works within a domain, the 30
 31 'potential space', that lies at the interface between perceived Self and observed 31
 32 Other, inner being and exterior world. But for Bingley *what* one is touching matters, 32
 33 as some objects simply work better as a tactile medium. They are not just bare 33
 34 materialities but active agents within this 'potential space', enrolling bodies into 34
 35 the world. She looks in particular at the materialities of clay and sand and their 35
 36 tactile effectiveness in art therapy practices, detailing ways these materials provide 36
 37 naturalistic, workable forms of physical expression of people's inner, imaginary, 37
 38 world, through the intensely sensitive feelings of hand and fingers. Such materials 38
 39 can be made to 'talk' without conscious effort, the inner voice can 'speak' to them 39
 40 through the subtle, elusive power of touch. Yet Bingley argues from her wide reading 40
 41 of the applied literature on art therapy that the fundamental significance of the tactile 41
 42 is all too often eluded. She delineates how the act of touching, what it can do for 42
 43 individuals seeking healing, and how it does it, are rarely acknowledged. Possible 43
 44 reasons for this include the primacy of the visual in recorded research, the unspoken 44

1 hierarchy of senses that tends to diminish the significance of the haptic realm, and 1
2 the fact that touch forms a fundamental ‘ground’ for everyday perception means that 2
3 often it is dismissed as mere background, and as such is hard to articulate through 3
4 text. This argument has much in common other chapters on the need to look beyond 4
5 the visual register including Pau Obrador’s analysis of the beach, Jamie Lorimer’s 5
6 examination of touching environmentalism, and more generally Anne Volvey’s call 6
7 for new forms of fieldwork attendant to the tactile. 7

8 Elizabeth Straughan’s chapter is concerned with the ‘body industry’ and the 8
9 everyday place of therapeutic touch as conducted in high street beauty salons. 9
10 She is particularly concerned with understanding the nature of facial treatments in 10
11 terms of the emotional exchanges and tactile relations between the touch giver, the 11
12 beautician, and the touch receiver, the paying client. This ‘body work’ involves a 12
13 significant amount of haptic labour with a range of tactile practices, coming from 13
14 the key site of the hands of the beautician and directed to one of the most sensitive 14
15 parts of the body, the face. Delivering a distinct form of therapeutic touch which will 15
16 improve the (perceived) appearance of the client’s skin, the emotional labour of the 16
17 beautician’s job should not be underestimated. Success in this regard, as Straughan 17
18 shows in *Facing touch in the beauty salon*, is as much concerned with psychological 18
19 connections as it is with the physiological condition of the skin. 19

20 Empirically Straughan’s work is focused on the feminised nature of the 20
21 salon space and draws upon her own experiences of receiving facial treatments, 21
22 recounting the routines and the staged ambiance of the place, the verbal discussions 22
23 with the beauticians and the variety of feelings engendered within her, both at a 23
24 somatic and an emotional level. To provide an explanatory interpretation of her own 24
25 embodied experiences of receiving therapeutic touch in beauty salons, Straughan 25
26 seeks to delineate the contradictory process of generating a sense of relaxation under 26
27 soothing hands whilst also unleashing anxieties about this very process, since skin 27
28 ‘problems’ are necessarily being exposed to scrutiny in order to be ‘treated’. She 28
29 brings to the fore Katherine Hayles’ (1997) theoretical concept of ‘corporeal anxiety’ 29
30 to account for the dialectical nature of beautification: that it depends on the decaying 30
31 nature of our bodies and simultaneously the desire to counter this decay. The result 31
32 is a compulsion to seek external ‘solutions’ that promise the restoration of something 32
33 ‘lost’, now centred in a commercial salon context that proffers scientifically labelled 33
34 products with their restorative and regenerative properties. Straughan’s analysis 34
35 of therapeutic touch and the anxieties provoked in terms of corporeality and the 35
36 effectiveness of commercial performances around ‘body work’ and emotional 36
37 labour, resonates strongly with Jennifer Lea’s work on massage practitioners and 37
38 Andrieu et al.’s chapter on research regarding the tactile work of doctors and nursing 38
39 staff in medical settings. 39

40 Straughan’s analysis of the nature of bodies suffering corporeal anxiety draws 40
41 upon two elemental ideas from Luce Irigaray’s (1993) work. Firstly, she asks us to 41
42 think about the nature of bodies in the salon using the notion of ‘*morphé*’, which 42
43 acknowledges the temporality of the body, continually coming into being and 43
44 breaking apart, requiring ongoing care. Secondly, Straughan uses Irigaray’s notion 44

1 of 'porosity' to account for the body's vulnerability to fragmentation and yet its 1
 2 fundamental openness to treatment. Bodies are not closed entities, and the porosity 2
 3 of the beautician's hands and the face of the client is a factor in facilitating 'good' 3
 4 or effective therapeutic touch. Along with Rachel Colls' contribution in this volume 4
 5 looking at the tactile fatness of women's bodies, and Sarah Cant's discussion of 5
 6 embracing tango dancers performing fluid movement, Straughan's theoretical 6
 7 engagement develops Irigaray's work on bodily difference and subjectivity for 7
 8 placing and conceptualising touch. 8

9 Anne Volvey's chapter charts the shifting 'knowledge regimes' that she argues 9
 10 underpin empirical, fieldwork-based, geographical scholarship. Such regimes have 10
 11 an often unacknowledged *episteme* that is critical in guiding how geographers come 11
 12 to know what they know about the world. As others have done, she contends that 12
 13 much traditional geographical fieldwork has been based upon the primacy of the 13
 14 visual survey as a way of knowing the world and has been criticised for its inherent 14
 15 masculine biases. Addressing this, Volvey delineates the emergence of an alternative 15
 16 knowledge regime for fieldwork, again spurred on in part by feminist geographers, 16
 17 one that is qualitative and based on discursive ways of knowing. While Volvey 17
 18 acknowledges the positive potential of this 'qualitative turn' in fieldwork she is 18
 19 simultaneously critical of this knowledge regime, centred as it is around 'talking' 19
 20 to subjects, and its tendency to overlook the other embodied senses, particularly the 20
 21 innate haptic registers of the researchers themselves. Consequently, in her chapter 21
 22 *Fieldwork: how to get in(to) touch*, Volvey calls for an 'expanded' knowledge regime 22
 23 for fieldwork that encompasses not just what is seen or said, but also how scholars 23
 24 *feel* about the world. This entails an ambition to accept the tactile experience of 24
 25 researchers as a valid form of data that should be treated as seriously as any other 25
 26 source in the production of scientific information. 26

27 For a truly haptic 'knowledge regime' Volvey deploys ideas from psychotherapy 27
 28 around 'transitionality', focussing our attention on the significance of the 'between- 28
 29 ness' of bodies and the world, the interface of 'me' and 'not-me', as a central part 29
 30 of our being. Using the ideas of 'transitionality', derived partly from Winnicottian 30
 31 psychotherapy, as a way to think about the significance of the haptic realm to 31
 32 self-being, clearly shares a sympathetic conceptual background with Amanda 32
 33 Bingley's chapter on touch in art therapy. Volvey argues fieldwork should be seen 33
 34 as a transitional practice, one that brings to the fore the unconscious incorporation 34
 35 of all manner of 'data' from feeling (as opposed, presumably, to the more usual 35
 36 'surveying') the field. Thus, fieldwork should not be seen in terms of an external 36
 37 agent collecting material 'in' the field, but more an experience performed 'with' the 37
 38 field. It enhances fieldwork, giving substance to non-visual experience and also more- 38
 39 than verbal explanations, enhancing the repertoire of social science scholarship. To 39
 40 some extent this effectively demonstrates comparable approaches in this volume 40
 41 (especially Hannah Macpherson and Pau Obrador), where the research builds upon 41
 42 empirics felt by the researchers' own bodies. Volvey argues this agenda extends 42
 43 feminist approaches to fieldwork by moving towards an *episteme* purposefully 43
 44 centred on more embodied, corporeal feelings. This kind of haptic knowledge 44

1 regime, coming out of fieldwork-as-witness, potentially opens up notions of the 1
2 researchers' own 'sense of self', allowing them to explore their existential motives 2
3 as well as their basic socio-political positionality. This could move geographical 3
4 scholarship forward in some surprising directions. 4

5 Hannah Macpherson's chapter describes the activity of guiding blind and 5
6 visually impaired people in the context of recreational countryside walking. This 6
7 leisure context provides a revealing and singular context to consider relations 7
8 between embodiment and touch. Her work seeks to understand what it means for 8
9 two people to 'move as one' through the landscape. Drawing on qualitative fieldwork 9
10 in which she was a volunteer guide on holidays with blind and visually impaired 10
11 people, Macpherson's analysis demonstrates the value of 'sensuous ethnographic 11
12 observations' in combination with interviews and photography. In her chapter 12
13 *Guiding visually impaired walking groups*, Macpherson deploys her own guiding 13
14 experiences to delineate the 'in-betweenness' of the touching bodies, of guide and 14
15 follower, and highlights how subtle yet significant these inter-corporeal spaces are. 15
16 Such inter-corporeal spaces are all too easily overlooked in geographical scholarship, 16
17 but especially in much conventional individual-centred 'wayfinding' research 17
18 with visually impaired people. Thus her research has wider value in highlighting 18
19 the nature of the spaces and practices where bodies come together experientially, 19
20 beckoning the intercorporeal world into some kind of symmetry, if only in fleeting 20
21 and partial ways. Such temporary inter-corporeality through touch is shared to some 21
22 extent with Sarah Cant's analysis of the social embrace and paired movements of 22
23 tango dancers, and also in Martin Dodge and Rob Kitchin's consideration of use of 23
24 public toilets that are shared with strangers. 24

25 Macpherson develops this notion of 'inter-corporeality', building upon Merleau- 25
26 Ponty's (1962) well known idea of 'body schema' and how they are extensible 26
27 beyond the strict physical bounds of skin and bone. Her analysis of guided walking in 27
28 the countryside illustrates how body schemas can become coupled, with two bodies 28
29 exhibiting kinetic synchrony, like a dance along the rural footpaths and mountain 29
30 trails rather than a mechanical follow-my-leader march. In trying to understand how 30
31 coupled body schemas work Macpherson deploys an ethical perspective, thinking of 31
32 touch as a gift that is given and received. In this inter-corporeality, importantly, the 32
33 visually impaired person is not a passive vessel or pitiable recipient of charity, but 33
34 is instead empowered by surrendering their independence and by choosing to gift 34
35 their trust to the guide. The guide's body does not give help as such, but receives 35
36 this gift of trust and has responsibility for its care. The gift of trust is made real in 36
37 the incorporeal space of touch. We can see parallels in this exchange of trust within 37
38 an inter-corporeal space of touch with Jennifer Lea's chapter on 'mixing bodies' in 38
39 therapeutic massage and Elizabeth Straughan's chapter on the touch between client 39
40 and beautician in the gift of facial treatment. 40

41 The chapter by Bernard Andrieu, Anne-Flore Laloë and Alexandre Klein examine 41
42 touch in the context of medical models of the body and health spaces, deploying a 42
43 range of conceptual cases studies to shed light on what they see as new kinds of 43
44 'biosubjective care'. It shares the focus on touch in therapeutic spaces and practices 44

1 by Jennifer Lea and Amanda Bingley in this volume, but concentrates on the relation 1
 2 between medical models of the body and strategies of healthcare. They argue that the 2
 3 caring potential of empathetic touch for therapeutic purposes has been consciously 3
 4 disregarded in mainstream, science-centric, masculinist, medicine, and has also been 4
 5 elided in conventional modes of nursing that are focused on material hygiene and the 5
 6 orderly management of ill bodies. Healing touch has been relegated to the margins 6
 7 by trained health professionals, and stereotyped (even stigmatised) as ‘alternative’ 7
 8 medicine. In *Touch, skin cultures and the space of medicine*, Andrieu, Laloë and 8
 9 Klein seek to explain this through the dispersed ontological status of the body in 9
 10 scholarly knowledge. They discuss the tendency to divide ways of understanding, 10
 11 with the ‘lived body’ on one side with its concern for surgical dissection of tissues 11
 12 and organs, differentiated from the ‘living of the body’ and its critical questioning of 12
 13 representations and discourses. Andrieu et al. contend that a focus on touch in terms 13
 14 of biosubjective care could be a useful epistemological tool for investigating the 14
 15 body, fusing together bio-physical and psycho-social bodily models. 15

16 Furthermore, Andrieu et al. aim to counter the particular kind of professionalisation 16
 17 of touch within medical practice and thereby to rethink medicine as a ‘tale of the skin’, 17
 18 one that acknowledges and integrates diverse tactile therapies and their expanded and 18
 19 enhanced capacity to heal patients. In this sense their chapter has resonances with 19
 20 the holistic arguments around touch and the body advanced by Amanda Bingley’s 20
 21 chapter in her consideration of tactile art for healing, the commercially determined 21
 22 ‘body work’ discussed by Elizabeth Straughan, and the professionalisation of kinds 22
 23 of healing touching within the beauty industry by Jennifer Lea. 23

24 Jamie Lorimer’s chapter takes us in quite a different direction and into a distinctive 24
 25 empirical context, concerned as he is with the touching that marks interspecies 25
 26 relations, in particular the complex patterns of embodied and non-verbal interactions 26
 27 that occur between humans and companion animals within recreational spaces. 27
 28 Drawing upon his fieldwork, Lorimer speaks of a ‘touching environmentalism’ 28
 29 which exploits the capacity to be in touch with, and to have actual tactile encounters, 29
 30 especially with charismatic animals such as koala bears or dolphins, and has become 30
 31 central to the wildlife conservation strategies of NGOs and ecotourism companies. 31
 32 As he discusses, there is an inherent ‘captivity paradox’ here, whereby wild animals 32
 33 are kept under close control so that paying visitors can get close to them, yet also 33
 34 have supposedly ‘authentic’ encounters with them. 34

35 In *Touching environmentalism*, Lorimer investigates the triangular relationship 35
 36 between an aging elephant, a Western woman on a volunteer holiday, and the 36
 37 local *mahout* who cares for the animal. Using empirical material gathered at a Sri 37
 38 Lankan elephant sanctuary through participant observations, filming and interviews 38
 39 he considers the different kinds of feelings generated, and possible meanings in, 39
 40 episodes of touching in staged encounters. In this context, Lorimer also exposes 40
 41 conflicts around how interspecies encounters should proceed and the different 41
 42 models of welfare, care and cruelty are at play in the sanctuary situation. How should 42
 43 human-elephant contact be considered? The elephant is ambiguously positioned: 43
 44 neither a wild beast nor a subservient pet. Instead, the elephant exists within a web 44

1 of relations and knowledges as what Donna Haraway (2008) terms ‘companion 1
2 species’, with long histories of relationships with humans. 2

3 By making reference to influential ideas from Haraway’s work, Lorimer proceeds 3
4 to think about the deeper histories and troubling relations that mark many kinds 4
5 of human exploitation of animals, and how contemporary responsibilities might be 5
6 renegotiated. For this he delineates various modalities of touch and identifies how 6
7 these vary across different actors (involving asymmetrical power relations and often 7
8 incompatible embodied knowledges), along with attention to their discrete historical 8
9 antecedences. In particular he explains how pre-existing colonialist notions, centred 9
10 around particular kinds of appropriate and inappropriate human-animal relations, 10
11 is still significant to contemporary touching environmentalism. He charts how the 11
12 elephant in particular has been perceived as an exotic icon because of its size and 12
13 strangely compelling physiology, sought after by hunters and subject to the deadly 13
14 touch of their rifle bullets, and also subjected to the scopic curiosity of nascent natural 14
15 historians. This attention has more recently morphed as feminised conservation 15
16 agendas have shifted the *episteme* from masculinist knowing (derived from elevated 16
17 visual observation) to a closer, more embodied and literal way of getting in touch 17
18 with animals. 18

19 Lorimer shows how such connections can be made to heighten interest in the 19
20 therapeutic potential (for the human) of the tactile sensations within human-animal 20
21 encounters. In many of these encounters people recount being touched, in some 21
22 spiritual dimension, through their communing with ‘pure’ nature by the supposedly 22
23 unmediated act of touching sentient animals. This has become another of those 23
24 packaged experiences for affluent consumers, such as swimming with dolphins, as 24
25 part of the wider growth of the postmodern ‘experience economy’. It is certainly 25
26 the case that those paying to work as a volunteer with elephants in the Sri Lankan 26
27 sanctuary sought some spiritual self-healing from their physical contact with the 27
28 animals. In making the conceptual connection between the immediacy of tactile 28
29 encounters and communing with something much larger, an other that awakens 29
30 larger spiritual feelings, Lorimer’s chapter shares some corresponding concerns with 30
31 Sara MacKian’s chapter by looking at the significance of tactile connections to spirit 31
32 for everyday well-being. 32

33 The importance of tactile engagement within everyday environments is the 33
34 subject of the chapter by Martin Dodge and Rob Kitchin. While their techno- 34
35 centric empirical approach diverges from other contributions, they seek similarly 35
36 to understand something of the social meaning of socio-spatial tactile interactions. 36
37 They also demonstrate the potential to mediate and modulate the haptic landscape in 37
38 contemporary practices of technologies such as computers, software algorithms and 38
39 digital sensors. *Towards touch-free spaces* provides a preliminary analysis focused 39
40 on the mundane but overlooked space of the shared public toilet. Examining the ways 40
41 that sensors and software are deployed to automate bathroom fixtures and fittings, 41
42 key aspects of toileting practice can proceed without the need for direct hand touch. 42
43 Their contribution draws upon anthropological ideas around the emotive power of 43
44 disgust and the cultural categorisation of dirt using Mary Douglas’ (1966) influential 44

1 notion of ‘matter out of place’. Toilets are inherently dirty places, and the desire to 1
 2 control disgust by reducing points of potential contact and contamination is strong. 2
 3 In the context of shared public toilets, the problem of surfaces that have been touched 3
 4 and thereby contaminated by strangers’ bodies becomes prominent. The analysis 4
 5 advanced by Dodge and Kitchin speaks to the relational significance of touch within 5
 6 the quotidian space of the bathroom, the apprehension and anticipation of the (now 6
 7 absent yet, evidenced by dirt and detritus, somewhat materially present) body of 7
 8 the other, and complements the discussions of the importance of inter-personal 8
 9 tactility in therapeutic spaces (see Jennifer Lea and Elizabeth Straughan chapters) 9
 10 and recreational activity including Sarah Cant’s dissection of tango dancing. Much 10
 11 of Dodge and Kitchin’s chapter audits the range of touch-free technologies that 11
 12 have become available from bathroom manufacturers and the kinds of promotional 12
 13 discourses expounded to sell these products, including the central claim around their 13
 14 hygienic capacity, the offer of efficiency and the promise of control. Looking at 14
 15 how touch-free technologies are being sold is bound into wider capitalist enterprises 15
 16 that exploit tactile landscapes and haptic labour for profit, something that is well 16
 17 explored in a number of other chapters including Bernard Andrieu et al.’s analysis of 17
 18 ‘biosubjective care’. A key conclusion of their chapter is to highlight the current real- 18
 19 world failure of technologies to meaningfully produce consistently touch-free spaces, 19
 20 that accordingly deliver to users a way to control these contaminatory contacts and 20
 21 therefore their disgust. In terms of a broader consideration of wholesale attempts to 21
 22 automate the landscape as ‘intelligent environment’ and ‘smart spaces’ using software 22
 23 technologies, the central question posed by this work concerns the feasibility and, 23
 24 crucially, desirability of the removal of so many routine tactile encounters within 24
 25 material space. Questioning the marketing and managerial rhetorics that desire to 25
 26 engineer away touch is important, because these are misguided in their utilitarian 26
 27 reading of the haptic realm, and fail to understand that touch is comprised of much 27
 28 more than surface sensations, a point consistently raised in other chapters. 28
 29 Sarah Cant’s chapter considers the significant role of touch, but also ‘listening’, 29
 30 in the experience of dancers of Argentine tango, a popular social activity around 30
 31 the world. The inherently improvised nature of tango, with its small repertoire of 31
 32 moves, handholds and forms of embrace means the dancing couple must be attuned 32
 33 to each other’s bodies, bringing shared kinesthetic experience into inter-corporeal 33
 34 being. In its popular image tango is bound up with strongly gendered roles of the 34
 35 male dancer leading a female partner, but Cant uses this form of dancing to think 35
 36 more subtly and with more suppleness about difference and subjectivity by using 36
 37 ideas from Irigaray. In drawing upon her own experiences of tango dancing, Cant 37
 38 seeks to challenge simplistic male-female binaries, deploying Irigaray’s notion of 38
 39 ‘listening’ across the silent shared spaces of touching bodies in the dancing embrace 39
 40 without reducing these to determined gendered differences. Social dances, like 40
 41 tango, with their varying degrees of touch-in-the-moment, are therefore interesting 41
 42 places to explore some routes to post-patriarchal discourses that are focused on 42
 43 how bodies multifariously and fleetingly ‘fit’ together physically and symbolically. 43
 44 In the *milonga* context in the UK that Cant examines, people are often dancing with 44

1 strangers and the tactile intimacy of embrace needed for real ‘listening’ to the partner 1
 2 is a challenge, requiring an inner confidence to open oneself to another person, 2
 3 to be sufficiently ‘in touch’ to let the dance flow. As Cant reveals from her own 3
 4 experience, it does not always work. The touching embrace that links two bodies 4
 5 may not necessarily form more emergent connections and may simply reassert 5
 6 traditional follower-leader roles, because one side is not ‘listening’ to the other. Her 6
 7 analysis also shows how successful social dancing relies on more-than-physical 7
 8 tactile sensations exchanged between paired bodies, and in tango it is the emotional 8
 9 connection growing out of the tactility of embrace, but not defined solely by the 9
 10 ‘haptic’, that works because it breaks down normative passive/active gendered 10
 11 roles. Holding in the embrace should not be a competition, a struggle for control, 11
 12 but ‘two singularities respectful of the other’s difference’. It is not about ‘equalising’ 12
 13 that difference somehow but about ‘listening’ to each other through touch. Dancing 13
 14 bodies are replete with sensations, and the magnitude of emotional connection 14
 15 cannot be equated to the tactile closeness of the embrace. Sometimes light touching 15
 16 in open embrace facilitates greater ‘listening’ and engenders a stronger sensual bond 16
 17 between dancing bodies. The physical extent of touch is less important than the 17
 18 degree to which it communicates trust and a willingness to anticipate and take risks 18
 19 together in bodily movements. In this respect there are substantive correspondences 19
 20 here to Hannah Macpherson’s chapter, while in Cant’s engagement with, and 20
 21 development of, Irigaray’s corpus, there is an overt overlap with the contributions 21
 22 by Rachel Colls and Elizabeth Straughan, who provide a reading of touch relations 22
 23 based on Irigaray’s psychoanalytically influenced feminist philosophy that aims to 23
 24 rework those simplistic inherited categories of bodily being based on male/female 24
 25 binaries, and instead articulate alternatives expressed through linguistic constructions 25
 26 and metaphor celebrating bodily differences. 26

27 Rachel Colls’ chapter uses paintings of self-proclaimed ‘fat’ female bodies 27
 28 by artist Jenny Saville as a way to think about particular modalities of touch and 28
 29 to challenge what she sees as the underlying masculinist readings of sensations 29
 30 emanating from Merleau-Ponty’s influential writing in the mid twentieth century. 30
 31 Like Sarah Cant and Elizabeth Straughan, Colls’ analysis in *Intra-body touching and* 31
 32 *the over life-sized paintings of Jenny Saville* draws upon the critical feminist theories 32
 33 of Irigaray, as well as recent ‘visceral’ scholarship attending to the very fleshy nature 33
 34 of bodily sensations and their social relations. Colls’ intellectual agenda centres 34
 35 upon an Irigarayan understanding of touch as a relation roughly between interiority 35
 36 and exteriority, the materiality of fleshy bodies and world, extending this by arguing 36
 37 for the need to consider the particularities of size and sex of the bodies involved. 37
 38 Most significantly she wants to highlight how bodies touch themselves (what she 38
 39 terms ‘intra-body touching’) and the fact that size *does* matter – hence her direct 39
 40 political call to look at fat bodies in new a light. Again employing and developing 40
 41 terms from Irigaray, in this case Colls focuses upon the notion of ‘morpho-logic’ for 41
 42 female bodies centred on Irigaray’s metaphor of the fluidity of mucous, as opposed 42
 43 to the solidity of the phallus. This highlights the distinctive nature of female bodies 43
 44 and how they touch – something overlooked in Merleau-Ponty’s work – and reminds 44

1 us that not all touching is visible and therefore available for objectification by an 1
 2 inquiring and acquiring gaze. Colls' chapter provides an insightful visual analysis 2
 3 through a reading of two politically-loaded paintings of fleshy bodies. She proceeds 3
 4 in this fashion firstly for pragmatic reasons, arguing that Saville's painting envisions 4
 5 a reality of how bodies touch themselves, but secondly she asserts that the analysis 5
 6 of such artworks is valuable in making sense of 'how bodies, things and matter 6
 7 relate "with" and "to" each other', granting evidence of touching relations residing 7
 8 in mucous which are not usually visible to external scrutiny, and also confronting 8
 9 historicised masculinist conventions in the visualisation of the female nude. This 9
 10 opens up an approach that challenges the normative view of fat bodies as estranged 10
 11 from the self and stereotypically read as socially disgusting. Rendering visceral 11
 12 bodies as visible in this way is potent, blurring simple boundaries between self and 12
 13 other, as folds of fat press against part of that same body – another quite literal way 13
 14 of bodies simultaneously touching and being touched. 14

15 Sara MacKian's chapter completes *Touching Space, Placing Touch* and provides 15
 16 an innovative dual reading of the tactile as both physical contact and psychical 16
 17 connection. She points to the mass acceptance of spiritual beliefs in the global North 17
 18 that constitute significant aspects of everyday life for many, and yet the majority 18
 19 may not participate in organised religious practices or churchgoing. This is most 19
 20 evident in self-adapted spiritualities, such as crystal healing and tarot readings, that 20
 21 operate beyond the institutional governmentalities of church or temple. Given this 21
 22 massive undercurrent of everyday alternative spiritualities her analysis highlights 22
 23 the therapeutic nature of spiritual touch, which need not be physically haptic to have 23
 24 real healing effects. In this regard there is commonality between MacKian's focus 24
 25 on spirituality and other kinds of 'alternative' self-help through tactile engagement 25
 26 discussed in other chapters in this volume, such as Amanda Bingley's consideration 26
 27 of art therapy and Jamie Lorimer's look at the healing that can come from getting 'in 27
 28 touch with' those larger natural (and supernatural) forces of nature, where swimming 28
 29 with dolphins is widely described as spiritually uplifting. 29

30 If the presence of spirit is unacknowledged and overlooked in much academic 30
 31 analysis, MacKian argues there needs to be consideration of how the more-than- 31
 32 bodily sensations that many people seem to genuinely experience influence their 32
 33 behaviours, and thereby contribute to the larger social structures and the material 33
 34 forms of contemporary culture. In *Touched by spirit*, MacKian looks beyond the 34
 35 physical structures, material practices and visual iconicity of conventional religions, 35
 36 to engage with the pervasive influence of everyday spiritualities. MacKian's chapter 36
 37 discusses how the 'lens of touch' affords a potentially valuable way to gain more 37
 38 nuanced sociological understandings of 'how' and 'where' spirit makes a difference 38
 39 within the unfolding practices of modern living. She examines in detail a range of 39
 40 'points of contact' with spirit by speaking to spiritual practitioners, recounting the 40
 41 sensations of tactile encounters, and also considering the deeper meanings people 41
 42 derive from being metaphorically 'in touch with' otherworldliness in the everyday. 42
 43 Often extended (and non-physical) senses of touch are realised (and literally made 43
 44 real) through the use of specific material objects in rituals, like the white feather 44

1 mentioned by several spiritual practitioners. Here bodily contact with such special 1
 2 objects works as a bridging device, opening connections or channels in a tangible 2
 3 and immediately comprehensible way between material world and immaterial spirit. 3
 4 This radically relational nature of touch, and the ways tactile experiences seem to 4
 5 bridge across and between bodies in physical and spiritual realms, speaks to the 5
 6 concerns of inter-corporeality and being in touch with far larger forces echoed 6
 7 elsewhere in this volume. MacKian's rich descriptions of the multiple ways that 7
 8 people are 'touched' by spirit can be taken as a progressive call for more inclusive 8
 9 social science scholarship. Such work not only acknowledges the importance of 9
 10 touch in the place of spirit, but solidifies the observation that touch, in its multifarious 10
 11 forms, impacts upon us in everyday life, yet is so rarely seriously considered within 11
 12 the social sciences. 12

13 14 15 **Placing Touch** 15

16
17 In *Touching Space, Placing Touch* each author with their adopted methodological 17
 18 framework contributes valuable points of reference for our growing mapping of the 18
 19 topographies of touch. The future of empirical research in the cross-disciplinary field 19
 20 of 'sensual studies' will have to feel its way, sometimes gropingly and imprecisely, in 20
 21 some cases using the traditional tools at its disposal, and revisiting the implications 21
 22 of some well-worn debates around issues like power, gender and positionality, before 22
 23 scholars can feel more fully at ease with writing about knowing the places of touch. 23

24 There are numerous ways in which we might locate, dissect and understand 24
 25 touch. The chapters collected together here range from those with a specific focus 25
 26 on methods of touch, to those exploring methodologies for understanding touch, and 26
 27 represent just the beginning. We are in the early stages of encountering, mapping 27
 28 and negotiating this particular territory within the academy. The project of *Touching* 28
 29 *Space, Placing Touch* therefore entreats scholars to consider, in *all* their empirical 29
 30 investigations – regardless of whether there is a substantive focus on touch – how 30
 31 their methods touch, and thereby alter, the worlds they are investigating. Do they 31
 32 want their touches to move those worlds, and can they avoid such touches even 32
 33 if they do not? The contributors in this volume go some way to exploring these 33
 34 questions about the methods of touch and the touch of method, thereby stimulating 34
 35 readers to consider and reflect upon the touching, feeling or haptic influences of their 35
 36 own research encounters. 36

37 38 39 **References** 39

- 40
41 Augustine of Hippo. 1950. *The Greatness of the Soul and The Teacher*, trans. J. 41
 42 Colleran. Westminster, MD: Newman Press. 42
 43 Bingley, A. 2003. In here and out there: Sensations between Self and landscape. 43
 44 *Social & Cultural Geography*, 4(3), 329–45. 44

- 1 Bunge, W. 1971. *Fitzgerald: Geography of a Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: 1
 2 Schenkman Publishing Company. 2
- 3 Butler, R. and Parr, H. 1999. *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness,* 3
 4 *Impairment and Disability*. London: Psychology Press. 4
- 5 Classen, C. 2005. *The Book of Touch*. Oxford: Berg. 5
- 6 Crang, M. 2003. Qualitative methods: touchy, feely, look-see? *Progress in Human* 6
 7 *Geography*, 27(4), 494–504. 7
- 8 Crary, J. 1990. *Techniques of The Observer: On Vision & Modernity in the 19th* 8
 9 *Century*. London: MIT Press. 9
- 10 Crary, J. 1999. *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture*. 10
 11 London: MIT Press. 11
- 12 Danius, S. 2002. *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception and Aesthetics*. 12
 13 London: Cornell University Press. 13
- 14 Dixon, D.P. and Straughan, E.R. 2010. Geographies of touch/touched by geography. 14
 15 *Geography Compass*, 4(5), 449–59. 15
- 16 Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution* 16
 17 *and Taboo*. London: Routledge. 17
- 18 Edensor, T. 2006. Sensing tourism, in *Travels in Paradox: Remapping Tourism*, 18
 19 edited by C. Minca and T. Oakes. Boulder, CO: Rowman and Littlefield. 19
- 20 Edensor, T. 2007. Sensing the ruin. *Senses & Society*, 2(2), 217–32. 20
- 21 Geurts, K.L. 2002. *Culture and the Senses: Embodiment, Identity, and Well-being in* 21
 22 *an African Community*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 22
- 23 Gibson, J.J. 1968. *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*. London: George 23
 24 Allan & Unwin. 24
- 25 Golledge, R.D. 1993. Geography and the disabled: A survey with special reference 25
 26 to vision impaired and blind populations. *Transactions of the Institute of British* 26
 27 *Geographers* 18(1), 63–85. 27
- 28 Haraway, D.J. 2008. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 28
 29 Press. 29
- 30 Harvey, E.D. 2003. *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*. Philadelphia, 30
 31 PA: University of Pennsylvania Press. 31
- 32 Harvey, E.D. 2011. The portal of touch. *American Historical Review*, 116(2), 385– 32
 33 400. 33
- 34 Hayles, K. 1997. Corporeal anxiety in *Dictionary of the Khazars*: What books talk 34
 35 about in the late age of print when they talk about losing their bodies. *Modern* 35
 36 *Fiction Studies*, 43(3), 800–20. 36
- 37 Hayes-Conroy, J. and Hayes-Conroy, A. 2010. Visceral geographies: Mattering, 37
 38 relating, and defying. *Geography Compass*, 4(9), 1273–83. 38
- 39 Hawkins, H. 2011. Dialogues and doings: Sketching the relationships between 39
 40 geography and art. *Geography Compass*, 5(7), 464–78. 40
- 41 Hobbes, T. 1962 [1651]. *Leviathan*, trans. W. G. Pogson-Smith. Oxford: Clarendon 41
 42 Press. 42
- 43 Hockey, J. 2006. Sensing the run: the senses and distance running. *Senses and* 43
 44 *Society*, 1(2), 183–202. 44

- 1 Howes, D. 2003. *Sensual Relations: Engaging the Senses in Culture and Social* 1
 2 *Theory*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. 2
- 3 Irigaray, L. 1993. *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*. Translated by C. Burke and G.C. 3
 4 Gill. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 4
- 5 Jay, M. 1994. *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century* 5
 6 *French Thought*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 6
- 7 Jones, C.A. 2007. *Sensorium: Embodied Experience, Technology, and Contemporary* 7
 8 *Art*. London: MIT Press. 8
- 9 Jütte, R. 2005. *A History of the Senses: From Antiquity to Cyberspace*. Cambridge: 9
 10 Polity Press. 10
- 11 Latham, A. 2003. Research, performance, and doing human geography: some 11
 12 reflections on the diary-photograph, diary-interview method. *Environment and* 12
 13 *Planning A*, 35(11), 1993–2017. 13
- 14 Laurier, E. 1998. Geographies of talk: “Max left a message for you”. *Area*, 31(1), 14
 15 36–45. 15
- 16 Law, L. 2001. Home cooking: Filipino women and geographies of the senses in 16
 17 Hong Kong. *Cultural Geographies*, 83, 264–83. 17
- 18 Locke, J. 1975 [1690]. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, edited by P.H. 18
 19 Nidditch. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 19
- 20 Longhurst, R., Ho, E. and Johnston, L. 2008. ‘Using ‘the body’ as an ‘instrument of 20
 21 research’: kimch’i and pavlova. *Area*, 40(2), 208–17. 21
- 22 Longhurst, R., Johnston, L. and Ho, E. 2009. A visceral approach: cooking ‘at home’ 22
 23 with migrant women in Hamilton, New Zealand. *Transactions of the Institute of* 23
 24 *British Geographers*, 34, 333–45. 24
- 25 Lowenstein, O. 1966. *The Senses*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books. 25
- 26 MacKian, S. 2010. The art of geographic interpretation in *The Handbook of* 26
 27 *Qualitative Geography*, edited by D. Delyser, S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M. Crang 27
 28 and L. McDowell. London: Sage. 28
- 29 Marks, L.U. 2002. *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*. Minneapolis, 29
 30 MN: University of Minnesota Press. 30
- 31 McCormack, D.P. 2008. Geographies for moving bodies: Thinking, dancing, spaces. 31
 32 *Geography Compass*, 2(6), 1822–36. 32
- 33 Merleau-Ponty, M. 1962. *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge. 33
- 34 Mitchell, W.J.T. 2002. Showing seeing. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 1(2), 165–81. 34
- 35 Pallasmaa, J. 2005. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*. London: 35
 36 Academy Editions. 36
- 37 Paterson, M. 2006. Affecting touch: towards a ‘felt’ phenomenology of therapeutic 37
 38 touch, in *Emotional Geographies*, edited by J. Davidson, M. Smith and L. Bondi. 38
 39 Aldershot, England: Ashgate. 39
- 40 Paterson, M. 2007. *The Senses of Touch: Haptics, Affects and Technologies*. Oxford: 40
 41 Berg. 41
- 42 Paterson, M. 2008. Review Essay: Charting the return to the senses. *Environment* 42
 43 *and Planning D*, 26: 563–569. 43
- 44 44

1	Paterson, M. 2009. Haptic geographies: Ethnography, haptic knowledges and	1
2	sensuous dispositions. <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> , 33(6), 766–78.	2
3	Paterson, M. 2010. More-than-visual approaches to architecture. Vision, touch,	3
4	technique. <i>Social & Cultural Geography</i> , 12(3), 263–28.	4
5	Pearce, M.W. 2008. Framing the days: Place and narrative in cartography.	5
6	<i>Cartography and Geographic Information Science</i> , 35(1), 17–32.	6
7	Rodaway, P. 1994. <i>Sensuous Geographies: Body Sense and Place</i> . London:	7
8	Routledge.	8
9	Rose, G. 2003. On the need to ask how, exactly, is geography “visual”? <i>Antipode</i> ,	9
10	35(2), 212–21.	10
11	Saville, S. 2008. Playing with fear: parkour and the mobility of emotion. <i>Social &</i>	11
12	<i>Cultural Geography</i> , 9, 891–914.	12
13	Serres, M. 2008. <i>The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies</i> . London:	13
14	Continuum.	14
15	Sobchack, V. 2004. <i>Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture</i> .	15
16	London: California University Press.	16
17	Sparkes, A. 2009. Ethnography and the senses: challenges and possibilities.	17
18	<i>Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise</i> , 1(1), 21–35.	18
19	Spinney, J. 2006. A place of sense: a kinaesthetic ethnography of cyclists on Mont	19
20	Ventoux. <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i> , 24(5), 709–32.	20
21	Stoller, P. 1997. <i>Sensuous Scholarship</i> . Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania	21
22	Press.	22
23	Thrift, N. 2007. <i>Non-representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect</i> . London:	23
24	Routledge.	24
25	Winnicott, D.W. 1971. <i>Playing and Reality</i> . Harmondsworth, England: Penguin.	25
26	Wylie, J. 2002. An essay on ascending Glastonbury Tor. <i>Geoforum</i> , 33(4), 441–54.	26
27	Wylie, J. 2006. Smoothlands: fragments/landscapes/fragments. <i>Cultural</i>	27
28	<i>Geographies</i> , 13(3), 458–65.	28
29		29
30		30
31		31
32		32
33		33
34		34
35		35
36		36
37		37
38		38
39		39
40		40
41		41
42		42
43		43
44		44