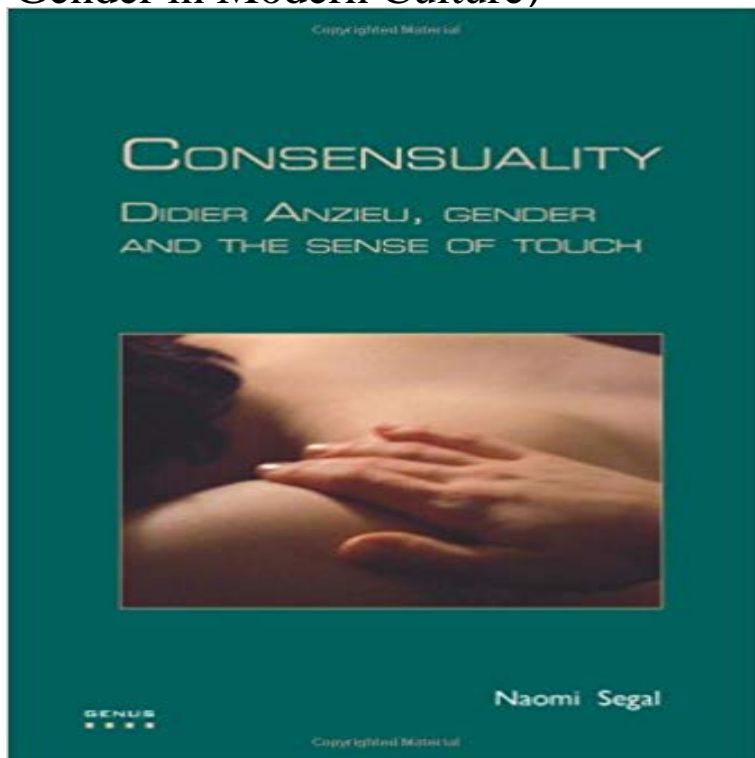


Consensuality: Didier Anzieu, Gender and the Sense of Touch. (Genus: Gender in Modern Culture)



The body is an emissary. We know little of our own feelings or the feelings of others, but that ignorance is mediated through our organ of touch, the skin. The term consensuality stands for the co-presence of perceptions on the skin, which is the backcloth to sensation and thought. If the intelligence of the body is the basis of both sense and consent, consensuality also has to do with human relations based on the sense of touch, particularly the mother-child couple and the relation of desire, love and loss. This book touches on a range of cultural figures including Gide, Princess Diana, Kafka, Gautier and Rilke, and such films as Gattaca, The Talented Mr Ripley, Being John Malkovich, The Piano and The Truman Show, together with theories of the caress, phantom limbs and replacement children. Connecting all these is the work of psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu, who wrote on group psychology, psychodrama, psychic envelopes, creativity and thought; he also published a study of May 68 written from the heart of Nanterre. He was analysed by Lacan, not knowing at the time that the latter had treated Anzieu's mother. His *Le Moi-peau* (The Skin-ego) shows how the psychic skin holds, protects and communicates but can also constrict or tear. If love enwraps and loss flays, how do we mourn?

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