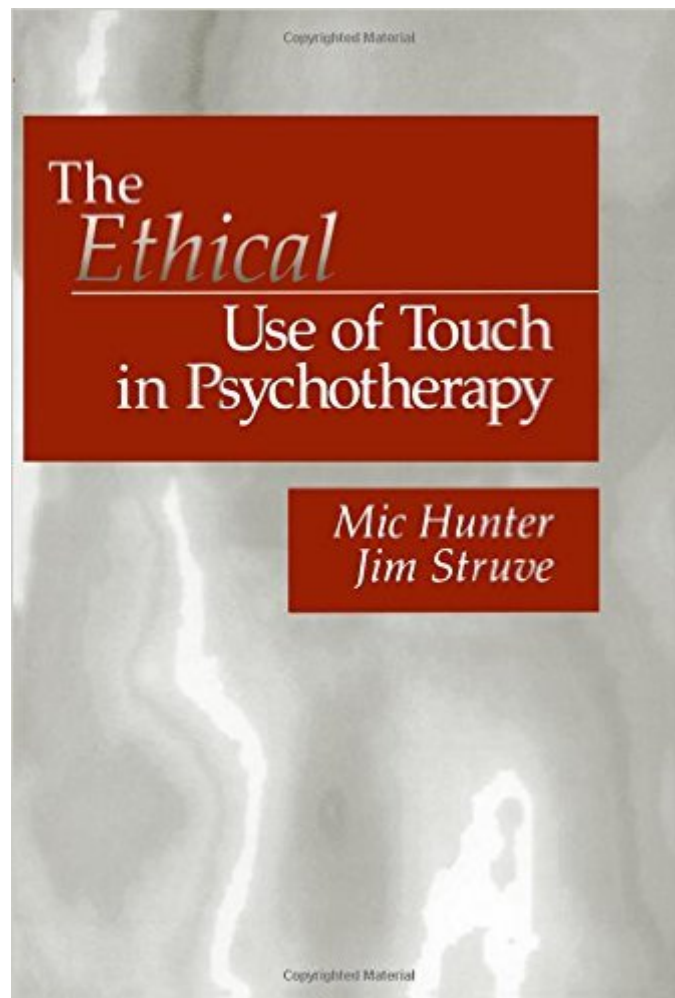




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# The Ethical Use Of Touch In Psychotherapy (And Political Culture)



## Synopsis

Is the bias against touch in psychotherapy justified? Is ethical touch an oxymoron? Can the recovery process be complete without healing touch? Mental health professionals are entrusted with the awesome responsibility of providing appropriate treatment for clients in a safe environment that nurtures trust, a necessary ingredient for optimum movement through the therapeutic process. Though treatment approaches vary, most modalities are verbally based and, in theory, exclude physical contact. Fearing that any form of touch would likely lead to sexual feelings or interaction, clinicians tend to shy away from the topic. In this book, however, Mic Hunter and Jim Struve skilfully demonstrate that touch - a most basic human need - is intrinsic to

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## Customer Reviews

I read this book a year ago as part of research I have been doing on the use of touch in psychotherapy. I read over 75 books and articles on the topic and it's this one that I found myself coming back to again and again. While the authors pull no punches as to their conclusions about the use of touch in psychotherapy, they remain fair, equitable, and rely on the scientific and research conclusions rather than the "myths" that have surrounded touch. I highly recommend this book to every clinician who does psychotherapy. There are a lot of people out there who continually remind us of the risks of touch between client and clinician. In politics we call these "fear tactics." And they use them because, well, they work. But as professionals, we are called to be above that.

Yes, touch has risks, as does about everything else we do, but if we practice from a stance of "I only do things that are 100% risk free, regardless of the research" then we will be very poor therapists. Hunter and Struve call us to a thoughtful conversation. That touch does not have to be sexualized all the time, that most of our problems with it come from a lack of willingness to talk about and be open to it. This book will begin that conversation for you, I think, because it did for me. I didn't walk away with a kind of "one size fits all" idea about touch, but a more scientifically based, research based, thoughtful and practical view of the benefits and limitations of touch in therapy.

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