

The Body



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The human body is thought of conventionally as a biological entity, with its longevity, morbidity, size and even appearance determined by genetic factors immune to the influence of society or culture. Since the mid-1980s, however, there has been a rising awareness of how our bodies, and our perception of them, are influenced by the social, cultural and material contexts in which humans live.

Drawing on studies of sex and gender, education, governance, the economy, and religion, Chris Shilling demonstrates how our physical being allows us to affect the material and virtual world around us, yet also enables governments to shape and direct our thoughts and actions. Revealing how social relationships, cultural images, and technological and medical advances shape our perceptions and awareness, he exposes the limitations of traditional Western traditions of thought that elevate the mind over the body as that which defines us as human. Dealing with issues ranging from cosmetic and transplant surgery, the performance of gendered identities, the

commodification of bodies and body parts, and the violent consequences of competing conceptions of the body as sacred, Shilling provides a compelling account of why body matters present contemporary societies with a series of urgent and inescapable challenges.

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作者介绍:

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