

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Histories of Emotions and the Senses

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SENSORIUM

*Contextualizing the Senses
and Cognition in History and Across
Cultures*

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Sensorium

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Abstract: How many senses are there, really? Do the senses have a history? What makes smell ‘the affective sense’ par excellence? Are the senses so many independent channels, or do they interact with and modulate each other? And, if so, how might we cultivate the capacity to see feelingly or smell colours? These are among the questions to be addressed in this Element. It pries the senses and perception loose from the psychology laboratory to focus on how they have been constructed and lived differently in different historical periods and across cultures.

Many of its findings are surprising because they run counter to our common-sense assumptions about the sensorium. They make uncommon sense. Plus the reader will meet some fascinating historical characters like the prolific C17th natural philosopher Margaret Cavendish (also author of the play *The Convent of Pleasure*) and the late C19th artist James McNeill Whistler, who infused his paintings with music.

This Element also has a video abstract: www.cambridge.org/David

Keywords: sensory history, sensory anthropology, psychology of perception, cognitive psychology, multisensory aesthetics

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