



# The Hand: How Its Use Shapes the Brain, Language, and Human Culture

*Frank R. Wilson*

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"A startling argument . . . provocative . . . absorbing." --*The Boston Globe*

"Ambitious . . . arresting . . . celebrates the importance of hands to our lives today as well as to the history of our species."

--*The New York Times Book Review*

The human hand is a miracle of biomechanics, one of the most remarkable adaptations in the history of evolution. The hands of a concert pianist can elicit glorious sound and stir emotion; those of a surgeon can perform the most delicate operations; those of a rock climber allow him to scale a vertical mountain wall. Neurologist Frank R. Wilson makes the striking claim that it is because of the unique structure of the hand and its evolution in cooperation with the brain that *Homo sapiens* became the most intelligent, preeminent animal on the earth.

In this fascinating book, Wilson moves from a discussion of the hand's evolution--and how its intimate communication with the brain affects such areas as neurology, psychology, and linguistics--to provocative new ideas about human creativity and how best to nurture it. Like Oliver Sacks and Stephen Jay Gould, Wilson handles a daunting range of scientific knowledge with a surprising deftness and a profound curiosity about human possibility. Provocative, illuminating, and delightful to read, **The Hand** encourages us to think in new ways about one of our most taken-for-granted assets.

"A mark of the book's excellence [is that] it makes the reader aware of the wonder in trivial, everyday acts, and reveals the complexity behind the simplest manipulation." --*The Washington Post*

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