

The Pictorial World of the Child

In this lavishly illustrated book, Maureen Cox gives a comprehensive and scholarly account of children's understanding and appreciation of art and their developing ability to produce their own pictures. She discusses the main influences on children's picture-making, including the popular media, adults' examples and other children's pictures, as well as children's own inventiveness and level of cognitive development. She considers the intriguing question, does children's art follow the same pattern of development as the history of art? Although much of the book traces the artistic development of typically developing children, it also includes a discussion of children with intellectual disabilities as well as those with a talent for art, some of whom are children with autism. We tend to think of pictures as a strictly visual medium, but the section on blind children's ability to recognise pictures challenges this assumption. Maureen Cox evaluates the way that various professional groups use children's pictures – to assess their level of intellectual development, to help diagnose and overcome emotional problems, and to aid recall of past events. Finally, she concentrates on children's art in the educational context, discussing the art curricula in different countries and different educational philosophies and suggesting ways in which these different approaches could be evaluated.

MAUREEN COX is Reader in Psychology at the University of York, UK. She has published eight books, including *Visual Order: the nature and development of pictorial presentation* (edited with N. H. Freeman, Cambridge, 1985), *The Child's Point of View: the development of cognition and language* (2nd edition, 1991), *Children's Drawings* (1992) and *Teaching Young Children to Draw* (with G. Cooke and D. Griffin, 1998).

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To Tony

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