

Foreword

Martine Delfos has written a book for the intelligent reader, explaining the strange world of autism. She reviews each of the theoretical fields of study and then describes our current landscape of knowledge as though from an observation balloon to provide a single explanatory model for autism. The project has been remarkably ambitious but the author has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the academic literature and the various theoretical models, and extensive personal experience as a clinician. The author also has notable respect for those who have autism and Asperger's Syndrome and she is able to challenge and change attitudes as well as increase understanding.

The first part of the book explains the nature of autism from a theoretical perspective while the second part provides a framework for the practical application of our research knowledge. The author also includes quotations and descriptions of individuals with autism that bring life and reality to the text. The summaries at the end of each chapter ensure the reader can quickly access the key points, which will be of considerable value to students studying autism. I suspect that academics will now discuss and test the theoretical model proposed by Martine Delfos, and clinicians will use Part 2 for guidance in the design of remedial programmes. Parents and teachers who want to explore the strange world of autism at a more intellectual level will appreciate the new perspective.

Tony Attwood

Author of Asperger's Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Professionals