Autism: A Very Short Introduction
Uta Frith

What causes autism? Is it a genetic disorder, or due to some unknown environmental hazard? Are we facing an epidemic? What are the main symptoms, and how does it relate to Asperger syndrome? This Very Short Introduction answers the key questions and offers a clear statement on what is currently known about autism and Asperger syndrome.

Questions for thought and discussion

- Has autism always been there, even though it was only identified in the 1940s?
- How would people with autism have been perceived a long time ago?
- Is there an autism epidemic? Can we see an end of the rise in cases?
- If autism has a genetic basis why is it not possible to spot it at birth?
- Are most men a bit autistic?
- Is the art produced by autistic savants comparable to art produced by other artists?
- In what way is it correct to say that we can mind-read and in what way does it make sense to say autistic people don’t mind-read?
- What advantages are associated with a detail focussed strategy as often seen in autism?
- How can we imagine a Self in the brain?
- Can we assume that autism is caused by a neurological abnormality, or is it simply a personality type?
- Autism and Asperger syndrome are portrayed in films and novels. How realistic are these portrayals?
- Without a biological marker for autism, what can experimental psychology contribute to the understanding of the condition?
- Will psychological research be at an end once the biological causes of autism are known?
- What would you do if you met a person with autism or Asperger syndrome?
- How does understanding of the autistic mind contribute to understanding of our own mind?

Other books by Uta Frith


Further reading
