
Contents

Preface ix

- 1 Identifying Autism: From Discrete Entity to Multidimensional Spectrum** 1
 - Early conceptions: the ‘autistic child’ 1
 - From discrete entity to spectrum of related conditions 5
 - Diagnostic systems and instruments 11
 - Dimensions versus entities: ‘lumping’ versus ‘splitting’ 16
 - Early detection 21
 - Conclusion 25
- 2 Understanding Other Minds: Cognitive Approaches** 26
 - Understanding false belief: a specific mental module? 26
 - Understanding minds: a specific process or something else? 37
 - Provisional conclusions 49
- 3 Understanding Other People: Emotion and Interaction** 51
 - Appraisal of emotion in others 53
 - Understanding the directedness of behaviour 60
 - Understanding others in autism: final conclusions 67
- 4 Beyond Social Impairment: Difficulties with Executive Functions** 70
 - Implications of the executive dysfunction account for our understanding of ASD 81
 - Conclusion 88
- 5 Building a Coherent Picture of the World** 90
 - Alternative explanations of WCC phenomena 98
 - Conclusion 111
- 6 Attention and Perception** 113
 - Attention 113
 - Accounting for attentional difficulties 125
 - Conclusion 133
- 7 Specific Aspects of Understanding: Faces, Concepts and Memory** 135
 - Face processing 135
 - Concept formation 145
 - Memory 152
 - Conclusion 165

8	Psychology, Autism and the Brain	167
	Studies of brain size and structure	167
	Lesion-based models of autistic behaviour	173
	Theories of global brain dysfunction	175
	Brain impairments inferred from more basic psychological processes	203
	Conclusion	207
9	Development	209
	Assumptions about development in ASD: psychometrics, matching and developmental delay	209
	Developmental trajectories in ASD	212
	Developmental change in two psychological domains: theory of mind and executive functions	219
	Developmental theory and ASD	228
	Conclusion	241
10	Whence and Whither: Glimpses of the Tapestry, Paths Through the Jungle	242
	How far have we really come?	243
	Stepping back to move forward? Emerging themes	247
	Final thoughts	261
	References	263
	Index	299