



Maria Montessori: A Critical Introduction to Key Themes and Debates

By Marion O'Donnell



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Maria Montessori considers the origins of Montessori education, examines the key themes of this philosophy of education and explores the relevance of Montessori practices today. Montessori students aged 3-18 study in a stressfree environment with no timetables, no examinations and no homework and yet they are empowered, independent and selfdisciplined learners. The curriculum follows the interests of individual children and Montessori educators focus on the development of the whole child, promoting happiness and wellbeing.

Marion O'Donnell explores the key aspects of Montessori education: child development; the learning environment; the role of the teacher; the role of the learner and parental involvement. Within each key aspect, Marion considers the implications for Montessori education, the views of critics and supporters, the implications for education today and the implications for research. Each aspect is considered within an international context, drawing on research and practice in Europe, the Usa, South America, Australia and Asia.

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Editorial Review

Review

This comprehensive critique provides enduring insights into the social and scientific pedagogy bequeathed to us by the late, great Dottressa. O'Donnell writes with great perception about the universal natural laws of child development which underpin all of Maria Montessori's objective, analytical, clinical observations. She has not shirked from setting out Montessori philosophy within historical debates about 'naturalist' education research. Montessori's years of observations of children's activities in the early Casa dei Bambini informed her emergent theories and resulted in the ethnography which is The Montessori Method. In the words of the Dottressa herself, 'teach little and observe much'. Wendy Fidler, Academic Director, Montessori Education for Autism (MEfA), UK

About the Author

Marion O'Donnell is a Montessori World Educational Institute (Australia) Workshop Lecturer, Examiner and Tutor. She has worked as a teacher all over the world, including in the UK, Canada and Australia. She has also lectured at the Queensland University of Technology, Australia, and been a researcher at the University of Queensland, Australia.

Users Review

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