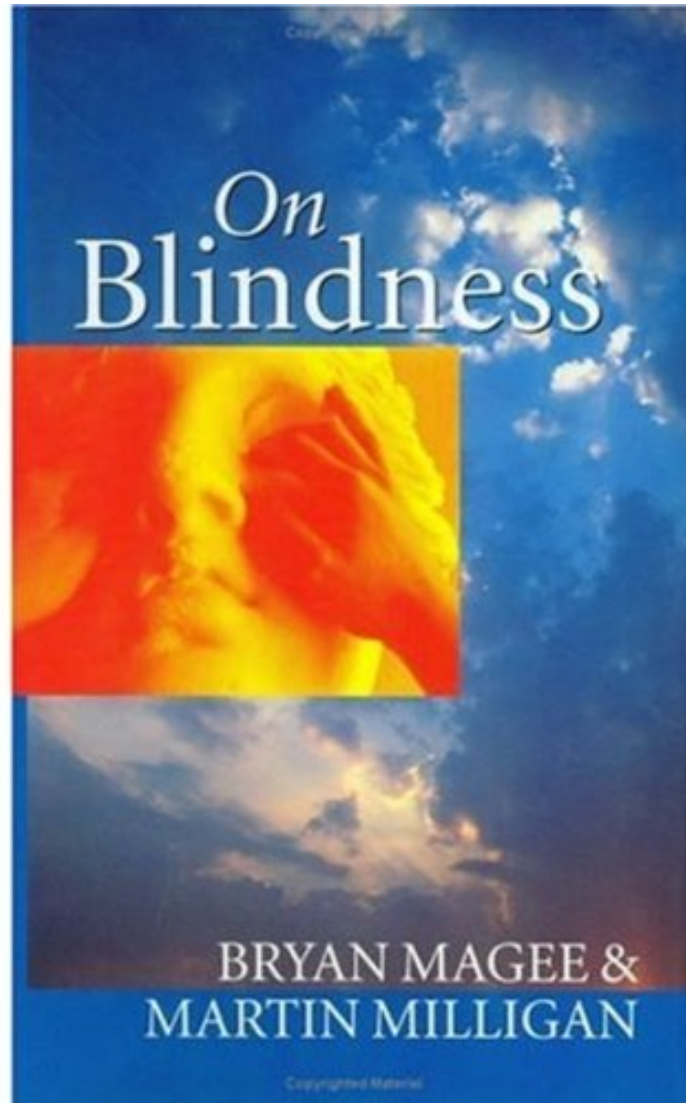


[Library ebook] On Blindness: Letters between Bryan Magee and Martin Milligan

On Blindness: Letters between Bryan Magee and Martin Milligan

Bryan Magee, Martin Milligan
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Bryan Magee, Martin Milligan : On Blindness: Letters between Bryan Magee and Martin Milligan before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised On Blindness: Letters between Bryan Magee and Martin Milligan:

For three centuries, philosophers have held that knowledge derives from experience. If so, it may be possible that blind people, lacking an important component of experience--visual perception--know the world in ways that differ from the

rest of us. Curious about this possibility, the noted philosopher, author, and BBC host Bryan Magee began to correspond with Martin Milligan, Dean of the Philosophy Department at the University of Leeds, and himself blind nearly since birth. *On Blindness* presents their fascinating letters to each other, letters which, as Magee notes, soon "hared off" in unforeseen directions, to delve not only into philosophical questions of perception, but also into the day-to-day differences between blind and sighted people and how these differences define their respective worlds. Through these letters, the reader eavesdrops on two brilliant thinkers as they wrestle with important philosophical issues and discuss everything from how to convey the stunning visual beauty of a flamingo-covered African lake, to tasting the "brownness" of coffee, to defining sight as "feeling from a distance," to Milligan's description of his own dreams and their significance. Much of this dialogue is quite thought-provoking, such as Milligan's assertion that people blind from birth do not "live in a world of darkness," that they don't even have a sense of what darkness is, nor would many of them want their sight restored. And at times the exchanges become rather heated, as when Milligan makes the philosophical argument that "knowing" and "knowing that" are essentially the same, that all knowledge is propositional knowledge--an assertion that Magee finds anathema. Likewise, when Magee claims that differences between the sighted and the blind "can only be described as vast," Milligan (who had fought prejudice against the blind all his life) sends back a passionate rebuttal. Here in the course of their wide ranging correspondence, Magee and Milligan probe the limits of what can be known, or expressed, or understood, shedding much light on the writings of such thinkers as Kant, Russell, Schopenhauer, and Wittgenstein, among others. And as they do so, they also bring their readers closer to understanding what divides the blind and the sighted--and what brings them both together in the struggle to understand the world.