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Line pictures by blind adults and children representing objects, space and motion

Blind people understand outline drawings much like sighted people. This finding requires us to give similar accounts for outline in vision and touch. What borders do outlines stand for? The answer is a challenging and unexpected one: a. in the negative: not purely visual borders such as shadow margins or colour contours and b. in the positive: the borders of surfaces (corners and occlusions). But further, we need to show how two geometries work here (similarity geometry and projective geometry) in vision and touch.

Further we need to give an account of drawing development, including the hypothesis that similar developments occur in sighted and blind children. On this basis we then need to develop distinctions between literal and non-literal representation. The result should be a coherent and systematic analysis. It should resolve arguments about figure-ground, explain linear perspective's effects and offer a literal base for metaphoric and symbolic representation. How far can present theory take us? Quite a way, but there are strong, interesting limits too.

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