

SIGNS OF OUR TIMES

Theological Essays on Art in the Twentieth Century

GEORGE S. HEYER, JNR.

There runs through Christianity, at least in its Protestant variety, a deep strain of suspicion towards visual art. In some measure this springs from our Hebrew heritage. The Old Testament is relentless in its fidelity to the Second Commandment, and the making of a graven image equals the construction of an idol. Professor Heyer examines idolatry and reassesses the true value of art as the expression of a God-given gift whose exercise can immeasurably enrich human life.

Apart from the numerous illustrations in the book, the text allows artists to speak for themselves, through their words as well as through their works. Thus the theological response addresses the vision that these people—the artists—have of their task and avoids distortion of that vision.

George S. Heyer, Jnr., is Associate Professor of Theology at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Texas. This book comprises the Gunning Lectures, which the author delivered at the University of Edinburgh in 1975.

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CHILDREN OUT OF COURT

MARTIN ● FOX ● MURRAY

Since 1971 Scotland has had a unique system of juvenile justice, in which a central part is played by panels of lay volunteers. In what was perhaps the most detailed study of any juvenile justice system ever carried out, the authors examined the operation of the children's hearings system throughout Scotland. They gave particular attention to the factors associated with decision-making by the panels themselves and by the intake officials (reporters to children's panels) who make the initial decision as to whether children referred to them by the police or other agencies are "in need of compulsory measures of care". These enquiries involved both a detailed analysis of records and systematic observation and recording of the interaction of the hearings themselves. Resulting data have been examined to throw light on the quality of practice, including adherence to procedural requirements and the participation of children and parents in the proceedings. Samples of children and parents were personally interviewed to gain understanding of their sense of the fairness of the hearings, their feelings of personal involvement in the process, and of issues of stigma and labelling. Large scale questionnaire studies made it possible to identify the operational philosophies of panel members and of the social workers who serviced the hearings. Concluding chapters review the implications of this project for the theory and practice of juvenile justice in Britain and in the United States.

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