

Why Survive?: Being Old in America

By Robert N. Butler MD


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The author questions the value of long life for its own sake, arguing that modern medicine has ironically created a group for whom survival is possible but satisfaction elusive. He proposed reforms to redefine and restructure the institutions responsible for the elderly in America.

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Editorial Review

Review

Butler questions the value of long life for its own sake; modern medicine, he says, has ironically created 'a huge group of people for whom survival is possible but satisfaction in living elusive.' He proposes sweeping policy reforms to redefine and restructure the institutions responsible for what he calls 'the tragedy of old age in America.'

(New York Times Book Review)

This book admirably reviews the panoply of ugly social facts which add up to 'ageism' (a term Butler coined, meaning prejudice against old persons). In such areas as housing, Social Security, inflation, nursing homes, and medical care, Butler reports pervasive private despair and public neglect.. [and] calls for a 'national policy on aging' which would encompass more and better health care, nutrition, transportation, and public service information.

(Library Journal)

Everyone should read this book... suitable for use in high school as well as medical school, and for readers of every age.

(Journal of the American Medical Association)

The best and best informed exposé to appear so far... every American of every age should read this book.

(Alex Comfort)

Crammed with facts that explode old myths.

(Boston Globe)

Eloquent, exhaustive, and formidably informed... A mandatory book.

(Kirkus Reviews)

Heavily documented, highly readable... jammed with recommendations for constructive change in every area.

(Science)

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* of American aging.

(*Washingtonian*)

Important, fact-filled, compassionate, and insightful.

(Judd Marmor, M.D., former president, American Psychiatric Association)

I commend it for clarity and lucidity, unpretentiousness and comprehensiveness... I think it is a classic.

(Karl Menninger M.D.)

About the Author

Robert N. Butler, M.D., is president and chief executive officer of the International Longevity Center–USA and professor of geriatrics at the Brookdale Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development at the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City. From 1975 to 1982 he was the founding director of the National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health. In 1982 he founded the first department of geriatrics in a U.S. medical school. In 1976 Butler won the Pulitzer Prize for his book *Why Survive?: Being Old in America*. He is co-author (with Dr. Myrna I. Lewis) of the books *Aging and Mental Health* and *Love and Sex After 60*. He is presently working on a book, *The Longevity Revolution*.

Users Review

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