

Human Values in Aging Newsletter - January 1, 2009

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H.R. Moody, Editor

IN THIS ISSUE

- The World Is Too Small for You
 - When Does Aging Begin?
 - Gloria Steinem: Past 70
 - A Stage for Memory
 - Web Sites to See
 - Books of Interest
 - Remembering Chuck Longino
 - Calendar of Events
 - Kierkegaard on Prayer
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THE WORLD IS TOO SMALL FOR YOU

The night will give you a horizon
further than you can see.

You must learn one thing.
The world was made to be free in.
Give up all the other worlds
except the one to which you belong.
Anything or anyone that does not bring you alive is too small for you.
-David Whyte, "The House of Belonging"

For the complete audio book, "The House of Belonging," visit:
<http://www.soundstrue.com>

See also: <http://www.davidwhyte.com/biography.html>

WHEN DOES AGING BEGIN?

We have become accustomed to hearing that osteoporosis is a disease with onset in adolescence and manifestation in later life. But the point may be true for other diseases as well. The life-course perspective means we need to see long-range consequences of early life events.

Could the origin of other disabilities of later life in fact be found in early life? That's the core idea of the so-called Barker's Hypothesis, named for British researcher Dr. David Barker at the University of Southampton who published his idea more than a decade ago. Barker looked at epidemiological data around the world and became convinced

that what happens in the womb can have long-lasting effects in later life. His point is that fetal events—such as food deprivation or other adverse events—can show up as susceptibility to chronic conditions such as heart disease or diabetes.

For more on the Barker Hypothesis, see:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/30/health/30age.html?pagewanted=4>

See also: http://richardgpettymd.blogspot.com/my_weblog/2006/09/thrifty_genes_t.html

ZALMAN SCHACHTER: From Age-ing On Sage-ing

Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi is the author of the widely acclaimed FROM AGE-ING TO SAGE-ING. For an interview with Reb Zalman in the "Older Learner" publication of the American Society on Aging, visit: <http://www.asaging.org/networks/learn/ol-061.html>

The Center for Engaged Spirituality at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado is dedicated to advancing the vision of Reb Zalman Schachter, who has inspired creation of "Spiritual Eldering" groups around the country.

To learn more about this approach to conscious aging visit the website at:

<http://www.naropa.edu/engagedspirit.html>

GLORIA STEINEM: PAST 70

At age 29, she was a Playboy Bunny; later on, a crusading feminist. Now times have changed and Gloria Steinem (aged 74) is thinking about age:

"Fifty was more about defiance for me: 'I'm just going to go on doing everything I did before.' And it wasn't until I was about 54 that I realized that doing everything I did before was not progress. Hello? And 60 was exciting. Sixty was like the new country. And 70 does sound like mortality. And it does make you think about dying."

For more on her thoughts about age, see Gloria Steinem, DOING SIXTY AND SEVENTY (Elders Academy Press, 2006).

A STAGE FOR MEMORY

"A Stage for Memory" is a guide to the Living History Theater Program of Elders Share the Arts. A Stage for Memory provides a comprehensive overview of twenty-five years of the "Living History Theater" program of Elders Share the Arts.

This publication includes an overview of the theories that underpin "Living History Theater," as well as detailed case studies. It also includes chapters with sample reminiscence and theater activities, as well as some nuts-and-bolts suggestions for how to start and sustain a "Living History Theater" program.

For more details contact the National Center for Creative Aging and mail to: 138 South Oxford Street; Brooklyn, NY 11217; or call (718) 398-3870 or visit: ncca@creativeaging.org

WEB SITES TO SEE

GEROTRASCENDENCE. "Gerotranscendence is a shift in meta perspective, from a materialistic and rational view of the world to a more cosmic and transcendent one, normally accompanied by an increase in life satisfaction." For more on the work of Lars Tornstam and gerotranscendence, visit:

<http://www.soc.uu.se/research/gerontology/gerotrans.html>

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES. "Think globally but act locally" goes the slogan. For details on how to do it, visit: <http://www.icohere.com/agingfriendly/sponsors.htm>

LOCUS OF CONTROL. We've all heard that improving self-efficacy and "locus of control" is the answer to the problems of aging. But is it? For another view, on why control is a double-edged sword visit: <http://www.meaning.ca/articles05/wise-locus-of-control.htm>

BOOKS OF INTEREST

TO LOVE WHAT IS: A Marriage Transformed, by Alix Kates Shulman (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008).

EXISTENTIAL AND SPIRITUAL ISSUES IN DEATH ATTITUDES, edited by Adrian Tomer, Grafton T. Eliason, and Paul T.P. Wong (Psychology Press, 2008).

HEALING LITURGIES FOR THE SEASONS OF LIFE by Abigail Rian Evans (Westminster, 2004).

REMEMBERING CHUCK LONGINO

We received the sad news that Charles Longino, Professor and Head of the Gerontology Program at Wake Forest University, died on Christmas morning. This is a great loss for our field. Former President of the Gerontological Society of America, Chuck was a gentle man, and one of the greatest specialists in migration, demography and aging. In addition, he was a staunch supporter of humanistic and critical gerontology in all its forms. We extend our sympathy to his family, his colleagues, and his many friends and students.
