

Old Isn't a Problem

by John L. McKnight

The United States is finally becoming a caring country. Shocked by assassinations, Viet Nam, Watergate and "stagflation" our people have turned to caring as the one ideal that cannot be corrupted.

Young people flock to schools of medicine, law, social work and urban planning. In spite of Proposition 13, two-thirds of our people derive their income from delivering services that are mainly caring.

The American caring that is growing most rapidly is service to the old. Our aging population is increasing so rapidly that a caring society can no longer ignore them. Lawyers, doctors, social workers, psychiatrists, physical therapists, counsellors and housing officials are now directing their care and concern to the old.

Concern for the elderly has resulted in an increasing professionalization of those who care for the old. This professional concern was expressed by the title of a recent conference convened by a major mid-western university: "Frontiers In Aging: Life Extension." The 700 participants were caring professionals from all the disciplines that help the aging.

Having been asked to speak to this group, I immediately consulted my mother-in-law. She is 81 years of age, comes from a Lithuanian background and lives in an apartment near our home.

We call my mother-in-law Old Grandma. She likes that name because she believes it makes her an authority.

When I told her that a conference called "Frontiers in Aging: Life Extension" was about her, she shook her head. She couldn't imagine they were talking about her because their language is of a different order than the words that Old Grandma knows.

Words like "frontiers," "aging" and "extension" are about going, becoming and moving forward. Old

Grandma doesn't think those words relate to her life. To her, old is *being*. When Old Grandma says "old," it isn't good or bad. "Old" is like saying she's a woman. It is a condition, a state. To her, old is something that is not associated with problems. A problem is how to get the janitor to get the steam heat up to the right temperature. But old isn't a problem.

For Old Grandma, old is:

- ... finally knowing what is important.
- ... when you are, rather than when you are becoming.
- ... knowing about pain rather than fearing it.
- ... being able to gain more pleasure from memory than from prospect.
- ... when doctors become impotent and powerless.
- ... when satisfaction depends less and less on consumption.
- ... using the strength that a good life has stored for you.
- ... enjoying the deference.
- ... worrying about irrelevance.

Old Grandma's "old" cannot be counted. Therefore, people who count things will never know about her old. They are trapped by the tools of counting. The economists, social scientists, census takers and actuaries are closed out of her world because they can't count what counts to her.

Old Grandma wonders about the problem of people who have a conference on "old." She thinks that there is a problem with people who think old is a problem. ■

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Comprehensive Guide to Board Wargaming Wargame Design

The "Dungeons & Dragons" phenomenon reported on page 125 owes much of its origin to the bloom of interest this decade in board wargames. *Wargame Design*, from a headquarters of such matters - Strategy & Tactics Magazine - gives sufficient internal history and technique to make any game player into a game maker. *The Comprehensive Guide*, from British gamesmaster Nicholas Palmer, gives a fine overall working introduction to the subject, including a comprehensive evaluation of all the games published by 1977.

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The Comprehensive Guide to Board Wargaming

Nicholas Palmer
1977; 223 pp.
\$12.50 postpaid
from:
Hippocrene Books, Inc.
171 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10016

Wargame Design
(The History, Production,
and Use of Conflict
Simulation Games)
Strategy & Tactics Staff
Study No. 2
1977; 186 pp.
\$9.95 postpaid



from:
Simulations Publications, Inc.
257 Park Ave., S.
New York, NY 10010

Helping Child Learning Difficulties

An important area of teaching or raising a child is in difficulties for teaching any as the basics of reading help him catch up for school.

The first section on level of perceptual parent or teacher severity of a child pointing out that result from his in or perform the n for example, one bols without some visual information tant about this s except for a brief Rosner deliberately difficulties arose the skills he lacks.

The second section child whatever she assess the arithmetic I've taught reading and writing many particulars most successful point I wish Rosner writing are forms been encouraged thoughts or to pe will not be much symbolic commu ing and caring; fo simply encounter what they have t if not in their liv

The third section anyone with a pr play designed to and motor skills most significant activities the par becomes for the adventure happil

A cautionary not who already has casual affair. Co by practicing on dom lengths of ti and classify your leads to his classi attempts to learn at all. If you are time and undistr someone who ca

Helping Child Overcome Learning Difficulties

(A Step-by-Step Guide for Parent and Teachers)
Jerome Rosner
1975; 326 pp.

To motivate you inces. That is w ties attempts to p allows him to rec not be a hugely s of motivation as He has to trust y trust himself. Cr