

# The Journey of Life: A Cultural History of Aging in America

Thomas R. Cole

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The Journey of Life is both a cultural history of aging and a contribution to public dialogue about the meaning and significance of later life. The core of the book shows how central texts and images of Northern middle-class culture, first in Europe and then in America, created and sustained specifically modern images of the life course between the Reformation and World War I. During this long period, secular, scientific and individualist tendencies steadily eroded ancient and medieval understandings of aging as a mysterious part of the eternal order of things. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, however, postmodern images of life's journey offer a renewed awareness of the spiritual dimensions of later life and new opportunities for growth in an aging society.



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