



The Coming of Age

Simone De Beauvoir

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As the definitive study of the universal problem of growing old, *The Coming of Age* is "a brilliant achievement" (Marc Slonin, *New York Times*).

What do the words elderly, old, and aged really mean? How are they used by society, and how in turn do they define the generation that we are taught to respect and love but instead castigate and avoid? Most importantly, how is our treatment of this generation a reflection of our society's values and priorities?

In *The Coming of Age*, Simone de Beauvoir seeks greater understanding of our perception of elders. With bravery, tenacity, and forceful honesty, she guides us on a study spanning a thousand years and a variety of different nations and cultures to provide a clear and alarming picture of "Society's secret shame"--the separation and distance from our communities that the old must suffer and endure.

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