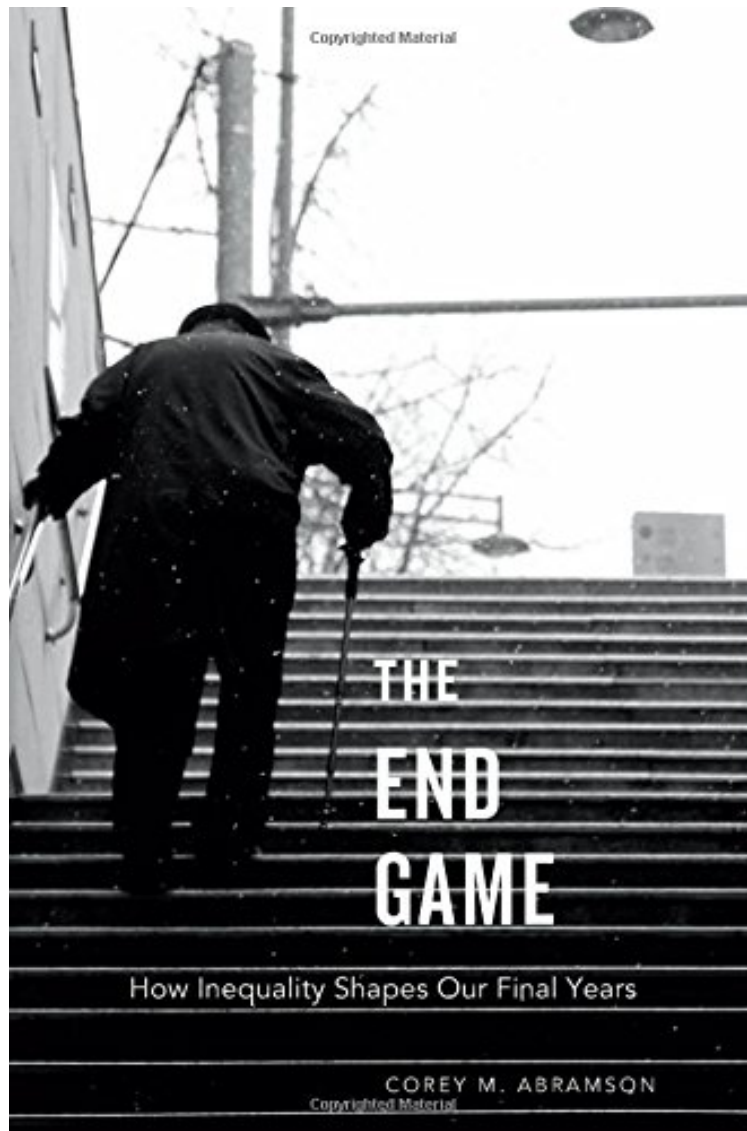


[Download] The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years

The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years

Corey M. Abramson

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Corey M. Abramson : The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Engrossing social scienceBy Deborah F. LustigThe clear and compelling writing, along with the puzzles about human behavior and the metaphor of the game, carried me along throughout the book. Really engrossing social science. An excellent blend of general patterns and specific

individuals. The extensive footnotes mean that it can be read on two levels and would be suited to intro classes in sociology as well as more advanced classes. At a few points in the book, light bulbs went off as I suddenly understood elders in my family, so I think it would be of interest to the general reader as well. It's not a book about policy, but there are clear policy implications. I finished the book feeling that although we can't change some of the problems of aging he presents, we can definitely do better as a society, and I see specific steps we can take. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Different experiences in aging put in perspective. By Johanna As a senior I found this book very informative and engaging. It was recommended by a family member who read it for a class in college. It is beautifully written and filled with great stories about people from various backgrounds. More importantly, it was well researched and made me aware of the inequalities that exist in the aging experience of different people. By putting the different experiences in perspective it explains why we need policies like Social Security and Medicare. 3 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Preachy and Anecdotal By Herbert Gintis Well-off males live about fourteen years longer than poor males, and well-off females live ten year longer than poor females. I thought this book would help me understand why. I was rudely disappointed. The author uses anecdotes and lots of interesting interviews to document difference between well-off and poor, but never attempts a causal explanation of what affects what. Are people poor because they are unhealthy, or is their lack of income the cause of their relatively fragile physical constitutions? We do not find out in this book. I also object to the sentimental and emotive tone taken by the author. I care just as much as the author about the plight of the elderly and of the poor, but I try not to let my heart take over from my head. The author conforms well to the current culture of sociology in reversing heart and head.

Senior citizens from all walks of life face a gauntlet of physical, psychological, and social hurdles. But do the disadvantages some people accumulate over the course of their lives make their final years especially difficult? Or does the quality of life among poor and affluent seniors converge at some point? *The End Game* investigates whether persistent socioeconomic, racial, and gender divisions in America create inequalities that structure the lives of the elderly. Corey Abramson's portraits of seniors from diverse backgrounds offer an intimate look at aging as a stratified social process. They illustrate that disparities in wealth, access to health care, neighborhood conditions, and networks of friends and family shape how different people understand and adapt to the challenges of old age. Social Security and Medicare are helpful but insufficient to alleviate deep structural inequalities. Yet material disadvantages alone cannot explain why seniors respond to aging in different ways. Culture, in all its variations, plays a crucial role. Abramson argues that studying the experience of aging is central to understanding inequality, in part because this segment of the population is rapidly growing. But there is another reason. The shared challenges of the elderly—declining mobility and health, loss of loved ones and friends—affect people across the socioeconomic spectrum, allowing for powerful ethnographic comparisons that are difficult to make earlier in life. *The End Game* makes clear that, despite the shared experiences of old age, inequality remains a powerful arbiter of who wins and who loses in American society.

Abramson takes readers on a journey through geriatric inequality to show how on the west coast of the U.S. the supposed golden years of post-employment for many individuals is an illusion, and in reality retirement is a corrosive quotidian struggle on body and soul. However, the saddening tone of this ethnographic work serves many purposes by shedding light on: the effects of social networks; rationalizations behind decision-making; greater understanding of general social stratification; and the symbolic as well as practical challenges of growing old in the U.S. Avoiding reductionist frameworks and showing the hugely varying lifestyles of Californian seniors, *The End Game* poses a profound question: how can provision of services for the elderly cater for individual circumstances and not merely treat the aged as one grey block? Abramson eloquently and comprehensively expounds this complex question. (Michael Warren LSE of Books 2015-08-14) Ethnographies of old age are few and far between, especially those that explore community-dwelling elders, despite the fact that they amount to 95% of the elderly population. Corey M. Abramson's book, *The End Game: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years*, with its insightful exploration of later life and the inequalities that shape it, is an especially welcome addition to the literature. Abramson's book offers something of value to all readers, and its critical message concerning age inequalities is one they should take to heart. (Toni Calasanti American Journal of Sociology 2016-09-01) Drawing on concepts from social stratification and cultural sociology, Corey M. Abramson demonstrates how key mechanisms of social stratification like health disparities, structural inequalities, culture, and social networks affect later-life experiences. Although the focus of the book is persons ages 65 and older, its messages inform our understanding of inequality more generally. *The End Game* is an exemplar of theoretically informed, methodologically rigorous qualitative work. The book may well join both long-time classics like Barbara Myerhoff's *Number Our Days* and contemporary classics like Eric Klinenberg's *Heat Wave* in introducing to a wide audience the indignities, inequities, and occasional joys of aging. (Deborah Carr Contemporary Sociology 2016-10-18) Abramson provides a remarkable ethnographic look at four urban neighborhoods inhabited by older Americans. He uses in-depth interviews to explore inequality and how it shapes end-of-life issues in ways never seen before. The author's approach situates inequality experienced by older Americans in a

real world context and links culture, social life, biological life, and structural disparities in ways that allow readers to understand the intersectionality of diversity imbued in the lives of older Americans Abramson opens a window into the reality of old age, the importance of culture and the impact it has on shared/prior experiences, and the inequalities that structure them. (A. L. Lewis Choice 2015-11-01)American seniors face starkly different challenges depending on economic circumstances. The End Game provides a deeper understanding of how inequalities affect the entire passage of our lives. (Robert Reich, University of California, Berkeley, and former U.S. Secretary of Labor)How inequality plays out in our aging population could not be a more important question. The aged are supposedly a group that we have done a good job at protecting with Medicare and Social Security, yet we still see sharp social gradients. This book, the first on the topic, helps to answer that question. (Dalton Conley, New York University)Abramson brings a qualitative eye to a topic we have mainly known through statisticsmortality rates, actuarial estimates, and life expectancies. With a refreshing perspective, The End Game brings us close to what people experience as they age, making clear not only that 'aches and pains' are shared across the board but also that access to resources matters enormously for how people manage those difficulties. The book dispels stereotypes over and over; his elderly respondents work to maintain their image, laugh at their failing memories, and smoke marijuana. The book is a terrific contribution to our knowledge of how people actually experience inequality in their later years. (Mario Luis Small, Harvard University)About the AuthorCorey M. Abramson is Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Arizona.