RAGE AGAINST THE DARKNESS: VIDEO SERIES
ON LONG-TERM CARE

Robert E. Yahnke
Rage Against Darkness is a three-video series produced by John Kastner in association with the Canadian Broadcasting System. The three videos feature stories of five elders facing decisions relating to long-term care. In Living Dangerously, Kastner profiles two people with different attitudes toward resolving their long-term care needs. The first individual is a man reluctant to leave his home and face institutional care—despite his son’s insistence that he consider moving into a long-term care facility. The second is a woman who has moved into a “senior lodge,” an independent-living facility, and yet who checks herself out regularly to return to her home for periods of time. The resistance of one elder, and the ambivalence of the other—with regard to their attitudes toward long-term care—makes for an intriguing comparison. Gert’s Secret profiles one elder, a woman of 101, who has lived for 15 years in a long-term care setting. This video offers a fresh perspective on the experience of living in a nursing home, and it provides insights into the ways in which—at least for this one resident—life in a nursing home has been fulfilling. Kastner reveals some of the ways in which Gert has thrived: the mother-daughter bond between Gert and Norma, her primary caregiver and regular visitor, Gert’s ability to get along with the various roommates she has encountered over the years, and Gert’s inimitable feistiness and even combativeness—characteristics which have enabled her to maintain her emotional and psychological equilibrium over time. The third video in the series, Bunny and Leona, compares the experiences of two sisters, one 67 and disabled, and the other 72, as they deal with their long-term care needs. For years they have lived together, until Bunny suffers several strokes and becomes severely disabled. Still in the hospital, she awaits—impatiently—a move to a nursing home. Meanwhile, her elder sister moves to an assisted-living facility and begins to thrive there. The video profiles the sisters’ differing responses to their environments, the dynamics of family relationships (one of Bunny’s children and his wife are featured), and the dynamics of the sister-to-sister relationship.

Editor’s Note:

This column will be the last Audiovisual Column to appear in The Gerontologist. For 30 years gerontologists have had access in this periodical to current audiovisual resources and insights into the usefulness and meaning of those resources. I am honored to have been asked to serve two terms as Audiovisual Editor of The Gerontologist (1997–2000 and 2003–2006), and I am proud of the quality of the reviews written by the 70 reviewers who contributed work during that period. I am also indebted to the work of the prior editors of this section: Richard C. Davis (1976–1982), Mary Margaret Kelly (1982–1983), James T. Sykes (2000–2002), and especially Andrea W. Nevins (1984–1997). All maintained a high standard of excellence in the quality of reviews and the coverage of pertinent topics.

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