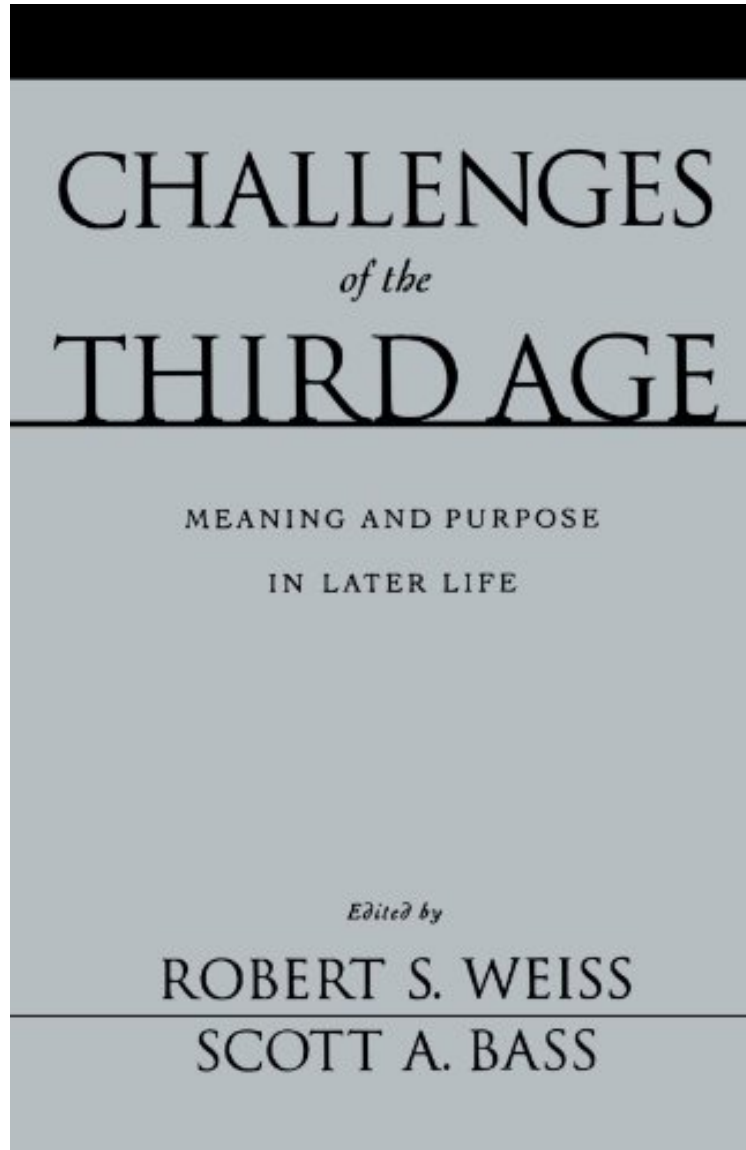


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Challenges of the Third Age: Meaning and Purpose in Later Life

From Robert S Weiss

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The newly retired are entering a time of life that is virtually uncharted, a time in which they are free from social expectations and, to a large extent, from obligations to others. Life's meanings are no longer provided by work and family. Instead, men and women have the freedom, and the need, to find new activities that they can imbue with meaning. The term, "Third Age" has been given to this time of life during which for most there is relatively good health, financial stability, and reduced family obligations. The problems and possibilities of this "Third Age" serve as the material for this book. How do older people decide how to deploy their continued vitality, now that they are free from the demands of work and children? How do they find meaning in daily life? In this book, scholars from several disciplines consider the way in which meaning can be found in this important stage of later life. They discuss sociological, psychological, and religious determinants of responses to the challenges of finding meaningful activity after retirement.

About the Author Robert S. Weiss is Senior Fellow and Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the Gerontology Institute, University of Massachusetts, Boston. Scott A. Bass is Dean of the Graduate School, Vice Provost for Research, and Distinguished Professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.