

Article review by Dawn Drake – Writing sample 5/2008  
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Lieff, J. (1982). Eight reasons why doctors fear the elderly, chronic illness, and death. *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 14(1)*, 47-60.

Jonathan Lieff, author of this article, holds a B.A. from Yale College and an M.D. from Harvard Medical College, and is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry (Ages Health Services Inc., 1996). When the article was published in 1982, Lieff had developed services for elderly, handicapped, and terminally ill patients in connection with the Boston Housing Authority, nursing homes, and hospitals. He had also served as Director of Geriatric Fellowship at Boston University and Chief of Geriatrics at Lemuel Shattuck Hospital, a Tufts University Facility.

In this paper, I summarize the article and offer comments about selected aspects, identify some relevant changes that have occurred since the article was published, and suggest areas where additional research findings would assist in understanding the current state of medical care in regard to the issues raised.

#### Article Summary

Lieff described recent (at the time of publication) research findings that indicated “widespread and well-documented prejudice” (p. 47) against elderly and terminally ill patients, and that suggested prejudice and avoidance behaviors were fostered in American medical schools. Lieff also documented benefits of

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