



Shock of Gray: The Aging of the World's Population and How it Pits Young Against Old, Child Against Parent, Worker Against Boss, Company Against Rival, and Nation Against Nation

By Ted Fishman

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A fascinating report on the astounding economic and political ramifications we face as the majority of the world's population grows old—chosen by the National Chamber Foundation of the US Chamber of Commerce as one of the top ten books every business and government leader should read.

The *New York Times* bestselling author of *China, Inc.* reports on the astounding economic and political ramifications of our aging world.

The world's population is rapidly aging—by the year 2030, one billion people will be sixty-five or older. And for the first time in history, the number of people over age fifty will be greater than that of those under age seventeen. Few of us understand the resulting massive effects on economies, jobs, and families, or grasp how our most personal decisions both age the world and drive unprecedented change in the global economy. Veteran journalist Ted C. Fishman masterfully explains how the shrinking of our families and the lengthening of our life spans change nearly every important relationship we have—to ourselves, our families, our communities, our workplaces, our nations, and the world.

What happens when too few young people must support older people? How do smaller families cope with aging loved ones? What happens when countries need millions of young workers but lack them? How are entire industries being both created and destroyed by demographic change? How do communities and countries remake themselves for ever-growing populations of older citizens? Who will suffer? Who will benefit? With vivid reporting from American cities and around the world, and through compelling interviews with families, employers, workers, economists, gerontologists, health-care professionals, corporate executives, and small business owners, Fishman reveals the astonishing and interconnected effects of global aging, and why nations, cultures, and crucial

human relationships are changing in this timely, brilliant, and important read.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Armageddon looms thanks to increasing longevity, according to this fretful jeremiad. Fishman (China, Inc.) visits a number of locales--luxury retirement communities in Sarasota, Fla.; the rust-belt city of Rockford, Ill.; a village in Spain; Beijing--and everywhere finds a skyrocketing population over 65 with attendant problems: soaring medical costs, overwhelmed caretakers and government pension systems, and oldsters who feel sad and neglected. Fishman weaves these findings with all manner of demographic, economic, and cultural discontents, including plummeting birth rates, environmental degradation, underpaid immigrants, American industrial decline, globalization, and outlandish teen fashions. Unfortunately, conflating all this under the rubric of aging's "shockwave" obscures more than it reveals; while focusing on an unsolvable existential predicament--you can't keep people from aging--Fishman avoids investigating solutions to specific problems he raises, which are mainly issues of trade, industrial policy, and economic inequality, not necessarily longevity.

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Review

"Who would've thought that America's aging population has spurred globalization? Ted Fishman's exciting book--a series of stories really--knocked me off balance as I learned what's in store for us as the world's populace grows older and older. The observations in "Shock of Gray" are not just revelatory but profound." - Alex Kotlowitz

"Far-reaching and highly relevant...[with] a fast pace, global scope and jaw-dropping facts...Fishman has a keen ear...and he motors enjoyably through a huge quantity of date and anecdotes, sending out provocative flares along the way." - "New York Times Book Review"

"In 20 years, there will be 1 billion people over the age of 65, and "China Inc."s Ted Fishman has found the current examples that, along with an inexhaustible supply of demographic trends, illustrate the knotty-and at times terrifying--issues of global aging that await us. A must-read for young and old alike." - "Fast Company"

"Readers should consider its messages and economic implications. What do we really want for ourselves, as individuals and a nation, as we age....The true mission of "Shock of Gray" is a...call to confront the demographic drama now unfolding in many middle- and high-income countries, not to proffer solutions." - "Los Angeles Times"

"The Chicago journalist behind "China, Inc. "is back with an investigation that's both timely and terrifying. The subtitle--"The Aging of the World's Population and How it Pits Young Against Old, Child Against Parent, Worker Against Boss, Company Against Rival, and Nation Against Nation"--says it all. (Though with his characteristic smarts, Fishman says it with a lot more nuance.)" -NewCityLit.com

About the Author

Ted Fishman is a seasoned financial and economic journalist whose work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Money*, *Harper's*, *Esquire*, *USA TODAY*, and *GQ*. A Princeton graduate, Fishman is also a former floor trader and member of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, where he ran his own derivatives arbitrage firm. He lives in Chicago.

Users Review

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