



Journeys from Childhood to Midlife: A Guide to International Stories in Classical Literature

Emmy E. Werner, Ruth S. Smith

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In a companion volume to their highly acclaimed book *Overcoming the Odds*, Emmy E. Werner and Ruth S. Smith continue their longitudinal study of approximately five hundred men and women who were born in 1955 on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. A third of these individuals had been considered "at risk" because of birth complications, parental mental illness, family dysfunction, and adverse early conditions such as poverty. Werner and Smith examine the long-term impact of these influences on the individuals' later adaptation to life. Drawing on data collected by a team of psychologists, pediatricians, social workers, and public health nurses across four decades, Werner and Smith chronicle the development of these men and women from birth to midlife: infancy, early and middle childhood, late adolescence, and early and middle adulthood. Their book focuses on protective factors within the individual, the extended family, and the community that allowed most of the men and women to be successful and to be satisfied with their lives by age forty. Most important, the authors document the remarkable resilience and capacity for recovery displayed by the majority of these baby boomers, who approached middle age as competent, confident, and caring adults. *Journeys from Childhood to Midlife* highlights key turning points in the third and fourth decades of life, and shows why more women than men succeeded in overcoming the odds. The work addresses the policy implications of the research and the need to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of current intervention programs for children.

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