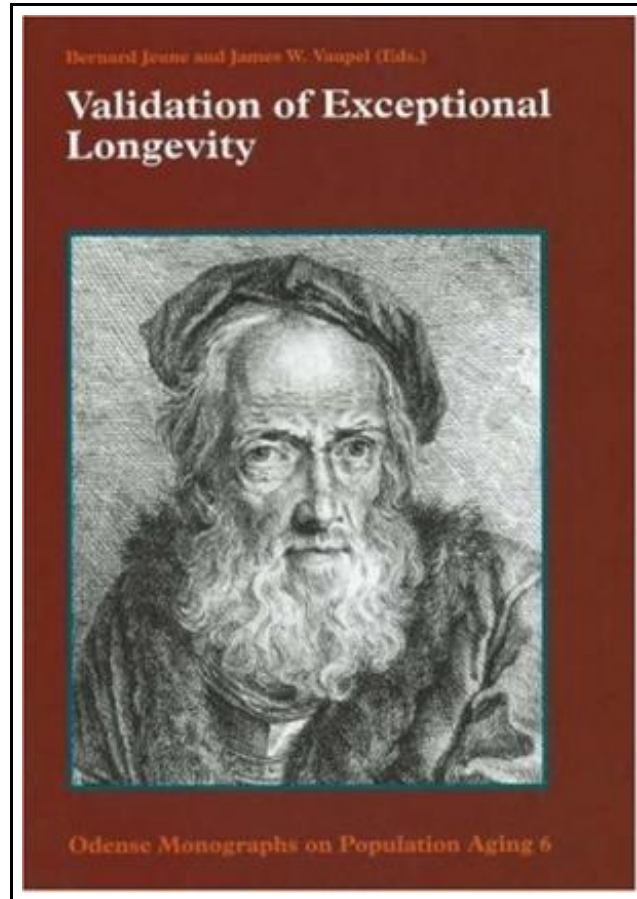


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University Press of Southern Denmark, Denmark, 1999. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 249 x 175 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. The history of longevity is a history of myths. This volume shows that most reported instances of exceptional longevity are incorrect. This was the rule everywhere until the end of the 19th century and is still the case in the vast majority of countries. It is only when reliable birth registrations are available for a century or more and when reports of ages above 100 are systematically checked against these data that the quality of national statistics on exceptional longevity improves. Several chapters of this volume provide further evidence that genuine centenarians before 1800 were non-existent or at least extremely rare. Sufficiently thorough attempts at verifying the maximal duration of life in different periods of time have not been made. Nonetheless, various gerontologists continue to make the undocumented claim that the maximal duration of life is 110, 115 or 120 years, and that this maximal duration has not changed over the course of human history. Unreliable reports of extreme ages in various countries and at various times, including the present, continue to be cited despite their implausibility and the lack of firm evidence. This volume carries on the laborious work of validating the ages of the few persons who may have been those who have lived longest. While the research was in progress, three exceptional long-livers died. These three were the long-livers whom the contributors to this volume scrutinised more closely than any alleged long-liver has ever been examined before. The three are Jeanne Calment, who died on August 4, 1997 at the age of 122 years and 5 months; Marie Louise Meilleur, who died on April 16, 1998 at the age of 117 years and 7 months; and...



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