

HOW SHOULD WE LIVE? GREAT IDEAS FROM THE PAST FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

by Roman Krznaric

Kirkus Reviews

Review Issue Date: December 1, 2013

Online Publish Date: November 18, 2013

Publisher: *BlueBridge*

Pages: 336

Price (Hardcover): \$22.95

Publication Date: January 1, 2014

ISBN (Hardcover): 978-1-93334684-7

Category: Nonfiction

The title of this potent lifestyle guide poses a valid question—and, after more than three millennia, still a good one.

In a dozen cogent discourses, writer, social scientist, “cultural thinker” and London’s The School of Life founder Krznaric (*How to Find Fulfilling Work*, 2012, etc.) delivers the back story to the art of living. Drawing on history to demonstrate how we once lived and selecting some of the accumulated wisdom of the ages, the author presents a sophisticated pep talk for the achievement of truly better living. The school of Socrates and the story of the founding of French department store Le Bon Marché are marshaled to the cause, as are the works of totemic teachers like the ancient Romans, John Stuart Mill, Henry David Thoreau, Leo Tolstoy, Albert Schweitzer, Adam Smith, Helen Keller and Kaspar Hauser, as well as lesser-known instructors. Krznaric considers human concerns like the varieties of love (currently a “cultural calamity”) and the importance of eccentricity and slowing down (time is *not* actually money). We have more than five senses, and not everything meets the eye. Krznaric also offers travel as a pilgrim, tourist, nomad or explorer as a path to a more rewarding life, or maybe a higher regard for nature could be the way. In addition, widely held beliefs should be reconsidered. (The author, for example, is dubious about the antiquity of the House of Windsor’s royal traditions.) Finally, the author calls upon readers to consider appropriate methods of dealing with death. Founded on thoughtful, accessible history, Krznaric’s message on approaches to a well-lived life is several notches above commonplace self-helpers. He offers a compendium of interesting miscellany; if it fails to improve the way we live, we will, at least, have learned a good bit.

Based on human experience, helpful hints on transforming the way we live.