

Pieta



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著者:Klein, George

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As Albert Camus's famous dictum has it, the only truly important philosophical question is suicide, or whether or not life is worth living. Now, in *Pieta*, his latest collection of essays, George Klein -- distinguished biologist, writer, Holocaust survivor, and humanist -- faces this question head on, in a series of meditations on subjects ranging from the misuses of science to the vital importance of art, music, and literature to surviving catastrophes like the Holocaust and AIDS. *Pieta* is a passionate book of scientific and personal ethics, inspired by tragic events that resonate in the consciousness of each of us. Klein examines the thoughts of a number of people both famous and obscure -- whose lives may provide some sort of answer to Camus's philosophical question. One essay, for example, deals with the tormented and unstable Atilla Jozsef, one of Hungary's greatest poets and now a national hero. Other figures from the past appear, too: fellow Holocaust survivor Rudolf Vrba, one of the first people to escape from Auschwitz; Simon Srebnik, a teenaged Pole who survived the Nazis by working on their riverboats, singing sentimental ballads for them; the geneticist Benno Muttler-Hill, whose meeting with Klein leads to a fascinating discussion of the role of German scientists in preparing the conceptual underpinnings of the Nazi genocide. Klein moves on to a more general elaboration of the misuses of science, from CIA-sponsored LSD experiments to medical experimentation by the

Japanese in Manchuria, and ultimately to a thoughtful reconsideration of his own role and responsibility as a scientist. He uses his extensive medical background to present a discussion of the processes of the biology of individuality, concluding with an extended and impassioned look at AIDS, as both a biological problem and a situation that will require the utmost pieta from each of us. Born in prewar Hungary, George Klein was raised in Budapest in an intellectually prominent Jewish family. He has led the Department of Tumor Biology at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm for more than three decades.

作者介绍:

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