

And God Laughs...

The Arthur Jones Autobiography

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“The evil men do lives after them; the good is often interred with their bones.”

William Shakespeare

Most of the people who come to our attention are from a relatively small part of the total population, individuals who have devoted their efforts towards attempts to gain fame or fortune, or both. But if they are successful, they may then find that very little turned out the way they expected. Having been unfortunate enough to become relatively famous twice in my life, and having become very rich at least once, I have learned some of the real costs of fame and fortune. If I had to do it over, and had any choice in the matter, I would pass . . . “Thanks but on thanks.”

In my opinion, the most successful people are those rare individuals who have managed to become wealthy while avoiding personal publicity. Starting in 1957, when the first film I ever produced was aired nationally on ABC television, I became widely known for my work with wild animals. Then, starting in 1970, when I founded Nautilus Sports/Medical Industries, Inc., and lasting until 1986, when I sold the Nautilus company in order to devote all of my time and resources to continuing medical research, I became widely known for my work in the fields of exercise and physical rehabilitation. During that later period I wrote and published four books and several hundred articles on the subject of exercise. Starting at the time I founded Nautilus and extending up to the moment, October of 1994, I have been the principle speaker during more than a thousand scientific seminars that were conducted in every state in this country apart from Alaska and Hawaii as well as in Canada, Japan, Australia and several European countries.

In my case, such films, publications and speaking engagements were requirements for success in my chosen fields of work; so I was not one of the lucky few who became successful while remaining relatively invisible, and thus I have also been exposed to the true costs of fame. Now, probably very close to the end of an already long life, I am still the principle speaker during day-long medical seminars that are conducted twice each month at the School of Medicine of the University of Florida, Gainesville; and have undertaken the writing of this book only in an attempt to set the record straight. A very large part of which published and televised record certainly has not been straight; some of which national and international publicity consisted of nothing short of outright hatchet jobs, blatant attempts to smear me in any way possible and with no slightest interest in the truth.

Many of my opinions, and my actions, as covered in following chapters will appear nothing short of outrageous to many people; and many of my actions now seem to me to have been outrageous as well, although they did not give me that impression when they happened. Certainly were not done in any attempt to perform outrageous acts of any kind. Were, instead, results of ignorance and stupidity that produced sometimes terrible mistakes.

I do not know whether an accurate list of my bitter enemies would outnumber a list of my friends, or vice versa, but do know that I have quite a few of both; and also know that none of what follows was written in an attempt to hurt my enemies, but that does not mean that I have either forgotten or forgiven them. Instead, this book was written for my friends, for people who do at least know parts of the true story and may find the rest of it interesting.

Success primarily results from being in the right place at the right time, and I gave been very lucky in that respect; my first films were produced at a time when it was much easier to get your films on television than it is now, and many of those films would not be acceptable by today’s standards, would not be “politically correct.” Later, in 1970, when I first became involved in exercise as a business, the time was also right; then having been generally ignored for centuries, the actual benefits of exercise were finally beginning to be recognized; and, rightly or wrongly, I have been given a lot of credit for the revolution in the field of exercise that occurred during the last twenty-four years.

But, together with such credit, I have also been blamed for a long list of things that I never did, some of which I wish I had done, probably should have done, and would have done if I had known then what I know now.

What follows is not presented in a chronological order, does not proceed smoothly from start to finish; but I believe it will all come together at the end. Life generally has very little in the way of order, usually consists of many things that are overlooked or misunderstood while they are occurring, that come together only long after the fact.