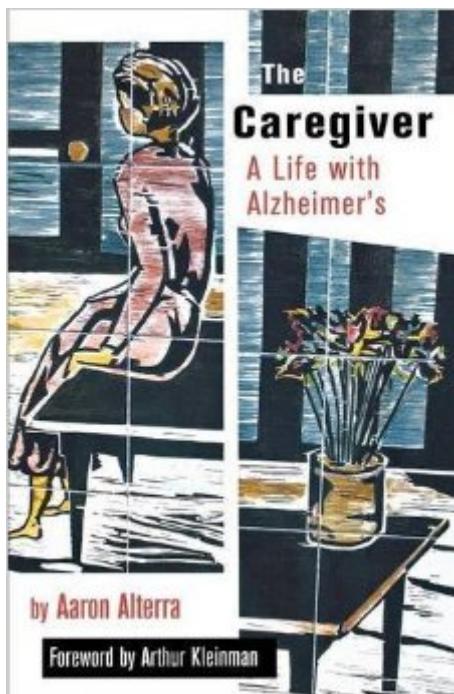


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# The Caregiver: A Life With Alzheimer's, With New Material (The Culture And Politics Of Health Care Work)



## Synopsis

Aaron and Stella Alterra had been married for more than sixty years when Aaron began to notice puzzling lapses in his wife's memory. Innocuous at first, they became more severe and more alarming. After a series of appointments and tests, the Altermas were informed that Stella was one of the more than 4.5 million Americans with Alzheimer's disease. Combining medical research on the disease and often-painful anecdotes of memory loss, deteriorating motor functions, personality shifts, support-group and daycare experiences, and drug trials, Alterra chronicles his transformation from husband to caregiver after his wife's diagnosis. More than a chronology of one family's experience of Alzheimer's disease, *The Caregiver* is an intelligent, beautifully reflective testimony to how family members turned caregivers become the ultimate advocates for their loved ones in the face of a disease with no cure.

## Book Information

Paperback: 232 pages

Publisher: ILR Press; 2nd edition (January 24, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801474345

ISBN-13: 978-0801474347

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.2 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars Â See all reviews Â (4 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,367,564 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #199 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Aging > Medical Conditions & Diseases #322 in Books > Textbooks > Medicine & Health Sciences > Medicine > Clinical > Geriatrics #534 in Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Internal Medicine > Geriatrics

## Customer Reviews

I read every personal book I can find about Alzheimer's and dementia, and have reviewed more than 25 of them here on . Among many excellent books (by Mary Gordon, John Bayley, Sue Miller and Virginia Owens, among others), I found this the very best. My father died in 2005, after descending into Alzheimer's. During the year I took care of him, I started reading memoirs on the subject--but somehow failed to come across Aaron Alterra's book until this year. From the first paragraph I knew I was in good hands. On page five I noted in the margin, "Every paragraph is perfect." And so it continued, one rich page after the next. I'm always swayed, pro and con, by a

book's writing, and Alterra (a pseudonym for the novelist and short story writer, E.S. Goldman) is a gorgeous writer: observant, deft, succinct and original. He would never heap on the adjectives this way, but I will, about him. The characters are spry, the dialog subtle, the descriptions powerful, his observations pierce like a quill. What can I say? I love how he writes. My father would never mark a book. I do though, so after I finish I can find felicitous passages or points worth remembering. I use checks, brackets and occasional exclamation points--and after reading "The Caregiver" I went back through the entire book, counting them up. I found over 130 pencilled marks. Alterra's scenes, of which there are many, are the lifeblood of the book. I ticked the opening of this one on page 63: "Ina Krillman's office decoration consisted of shelves of books and pamphlets and a row of folding metal chairs arranged for a small meeting in front of a small desk that she dominated like an adult on a pony.

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