

Linkletter and Kids

Art Linkletter had a positive impact – providing both humor and inspiration – for millions upon millions of people during his lifetime. And that included, in particular, Life Care, for Linkletter was the keynote speaker for our annual management meeting in 1992 and the directors of nursing annual meeting in 1993.

He was the host of *House Party*, which ran on CBS radio and television for 25 years, and *People Are Funny*, on NBC radio-TV for 19 years. His greatest fame, of course, was for interviewing children on *House Party* and *Kids Say the Darndest Things*, which led to a series of books quoting children. One of his later books – and the subject of his address to Life Care – was *Old Age is Not for Sissies*.

Linkletter died on May 26, 2010, at the age of 97. He was married to Lois Foerster for 74½ years. In his autobiography, *Confessions of a Happy Man*, he revealed that he had no contact with his natural parents or his sister or two brothers since he was abandoned when only a few weeks old. He was adopted by Mary and Fulton John Linkletter, an evangelical preacher.



Here are some examples of the kind of responses he often got from children. These are letters from Sunday school students to God:

- Dear God, please put another holiday between Christmas and Easter. There is nothing good in there now.
- Dear Mr. God, I wish You would not make it so easy for people to come apart. I had to have three stitches and a shot.
- Dear God, I think about You sometimes even when I'm not praying.
- Dear God, Did You really mean "do unto others as they do unto you?" Because if You did, then I'm going to fix my brother.
- Dear God, I didn't think orange went with purple until I saw the sunset You made on Tuesday. That was cool!
- Dear God, I read the Bible. What does *begat* mean? Nobody will tell me.
- Dear God, Are You really invisible or is that a trick?
- Dear God, Did You mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident?

Ahh, out of the mouths of babes ...

– Beecher Hunter