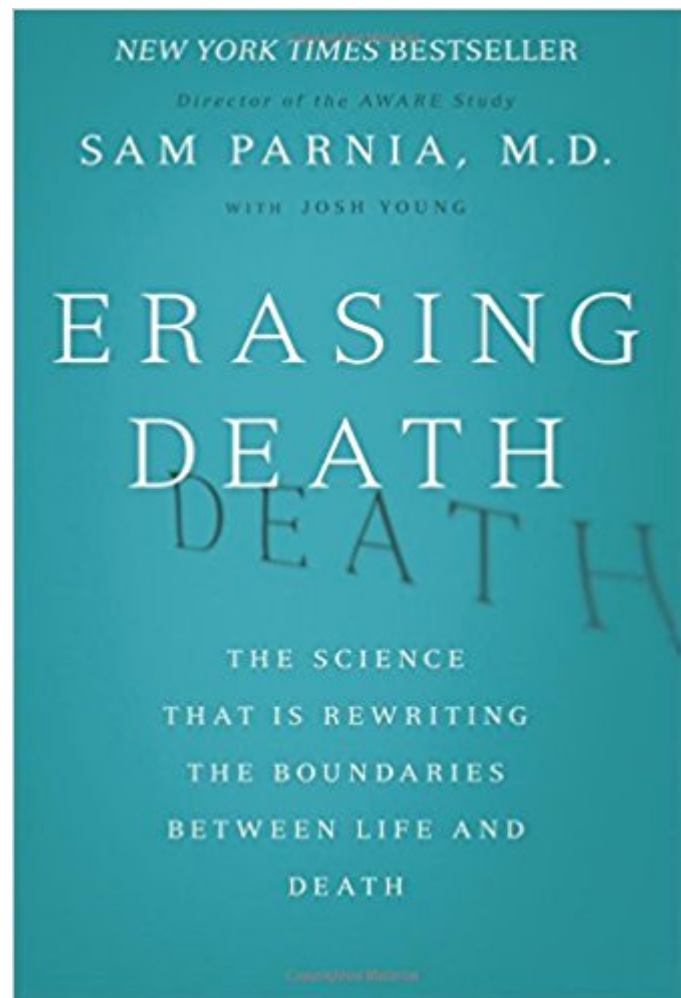




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Erasing Death: The Science That Is Rewriting The Boundaries Between Life And Death



Synopsis

Erasing Death: The Science That Is Rewriting the Boundaries Between Life and Death reveals that death is not a moment in time. Death, rather, is a process—a process that can be interrupted well after it has begun. Innovative techniques have proven to be effective in revitalizing both the body and mind, but they are only employed in approximately half of the hospitals throughout the United States and Europe. Dr. Sam Parnia, Director of the AWARE Study (AWAREness during REsuscitation) and one of the world's leading experts on the scientific study of death and near-death experiences (NDE), presents cutting-edge research from the front lines of critical care and resuscitation medicine while also shedding light on the ultimate mystery: What happens to human consciousness during and after death? Dr. Parnia reveals how some form of "afterlife" may be uniquely ours, as evidenced by the continuation of the human mind and psyche after the brain stops functioning. With physicians such as Dr. Parnia at the forefront, we are on the verge of discovering a new universal science of consciousness that reveals the nature of mind and a future where death is not the final defeat, but is, in fact, reversible.

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Customer Reviews

In Erasing Death, Sam Parnia has created a highly readable review of the area of resuscitation medicine and of the now widely accepted phenomena of Near Death Experiences (NDEs) or Actual Death Experiences as he calls them. He provides a very thorough exploration of all the possible scientific theories, clearly showing why each falls short. In addition he has brought to light some of

the latest developments in medicine that should improve survival rates. Erasing Death also delves into the philosophical debate about the existence of the soul, and whether it is something that is generated by the brain or that uses the brain as a host. This discussion is expanded into the whole area of what consciousness means, including tussling with some of the modern attempts to explain it in quantum mechanical terms. Parnia is clearly a man who has contemplated and researched these concepts for many years, driven by the context of his own father's tragic permanent loss of consciousness and of the various experiences he has witnessed in emergency medicine. However, many, would have bought this book to learn about results from the AWARE study and Dr Parnia does not disappoint. I will not put a spoiler in, particularly relating to any evidence supporting the out of body experience, but he does discuss some tantalizing initial findings. Interestingly, it would appear that a book published over a year ago, called *Aware of Aware* by Ben Williams, may have been on the money when it came to predicting the outcome. From what is revealed in *Erasing Death* it would appear that there are plans to expand the study and tighten some of the techniques used to insure better capturing of any evidence. As Parnia points out, this is a new area of science and these researchers are the trail blazers.

Parnia deftly explains very complex processes for a non-professional audience. The book is roughly divided into an exploration of resuscitation and of experiences reported by people concerning while dead. In both sections he discusses standardization of process and scientific method. His language is smooth and easy to follow while not being so elementary to be condescending or boring. His discussion of the "zip code" lottery that dictates the skill of the team attempting resuscitation is truly shocking. Equally disquieting is the fact that survival of cardiac stoppage has not improved since 1965. He presents compelling arguments for the training in CPR, the use of lowering the temperature in the patient, updating equipment, and mandating best practice are all balanced persuasive. Equally fascinating for me were his description of the exact mechanisms of death. He is quite detailed on the cascade of events that accompany the halting of a heart. Parnia has chosen to scientifically study the reports of patients returning from cardiac death. His findings come strongly in support of cultural reports. He makes very solid argument for believing the brain and the self are not one entity. The philosophical history is an interesting adjunct to the exposition. This part of the book provides a concise and thorough explication of the theories of the near death experience. He also provides convincing counter arguments to those who believe they are simply artifacts of the dying brain. I heard of this book on NPR, and I am pleased with the reference. There is some repetition of content between chapters, the context is different. Therefore the repetition may be to support

different points. It isn't annoying.

This book could easily have been and perhaps should have been a long magazine article. But then it wouldn't be a book! And a book is, after all, way less transient and much more enduring than a magazine article. Also, a book is much more able to experience an Afterlife than is a ephemeral magazine article - and that may seem fitting with the book in hand, since a great part of it deals with the much contested Afterlife. Oh, one other thing to consider: a book...makes more money. Why do I argue against this book's having to be a book to carry its messages? Because the book is heavily padded and extremely redundant. Nails are hammered over and over and over again that were hit home on the first blow, second or third blows. But the hammering goes on needlessly! Such as the topic of the use of cold therapy to better the chances of a dying person's resuscitation. Or the differentiation betwixt NDEs and ADEs. Sometimes I felt I was being taught my ABCs all o'er again. Then there is the irksome issue of sources - or more precisely the convoluted, confusing way in which they are outlined in the bibliography. Also, there is NO index. And that is deplorable because there are a few very interesting personal stories - but they have hardly no verifications. For example: on pages 199 - 202 is a story of a man who after ten years of being seemingly brain-dead, suddenly roused to sentience for a bit. If this story is true, then it is indeed extreme evidence that the "soul" of this man was elsewhere for ten years and had NOT "died" as seemed apparent by the ten years of a vegetative state. But there is no source for this story other than the author's writing of it. (If it is somewhere in the bibliography, to discover it would be like looking for the proverbial needle.

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