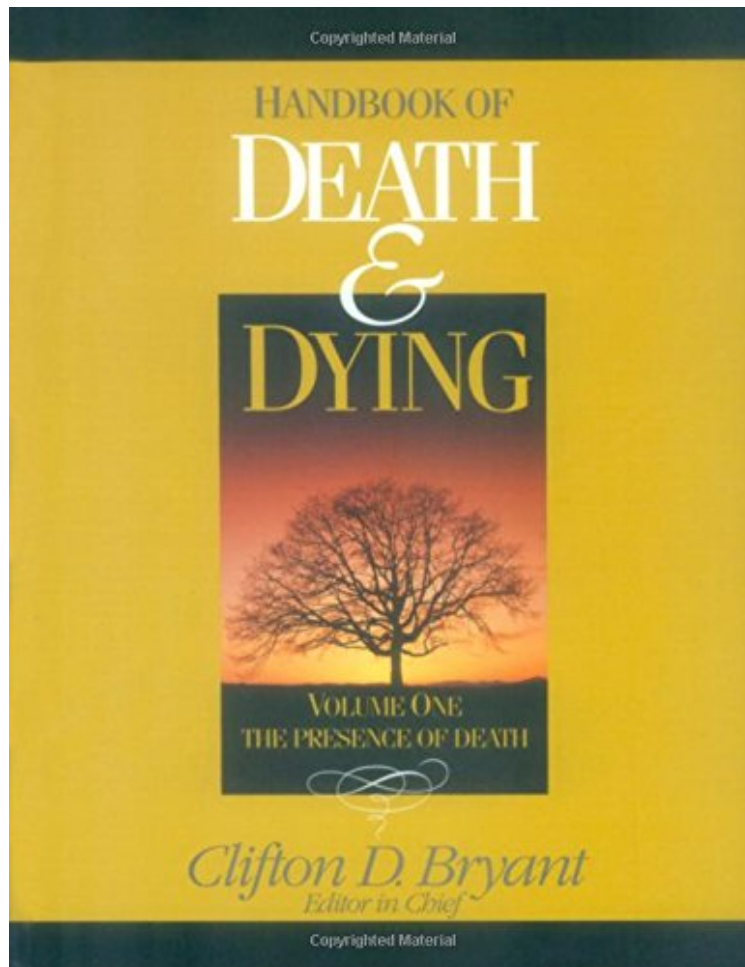


(Free) Handbook of Death and Dying

## Handbook of Death and Dying

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**From Brand: SAGE Publications, Inc : Handbook of Death and Dying** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Handbook of Death and Dying:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Review from a contributor By William R. Wood I somewhat agree with the first review of this work . . . I think. The two-volume set does focus "largely on the social aspects of death," as it is meant to be a largely sociological and "cultural studies" approach to death and dying. For some, including myself, it does not succulently address either the theological or psychological questions of how one is to face their own mortality, of how to make sense of death in a seemingly non-sensical world. But then again, this has never been the realm of sociology, history, or even culture studies. What these two books do, and do well in my opinion, is address (among other things) the larger reasons why death has become so removed from our culture, as well as explore other cultural, historical and social approaches to death and dying. It also reveals the particular ways in which we make sense of death as a culture . . . death as "accident," death as suicide, death as punishment. For those seeking to explore their

own theological or psychological relationship to death, I suggest other well-known works. Philosophically, one should perhaps start with Plato's Apology in the western tradition, or various "non-western" philosophical approaches to death and dying found in Hinduism and Buddhism. Theologically, the list is almost endless in the Judeo-Christian tradition, not only in terms of religious texts, but in the succession of thinkers such as Origen of Alexandria to Augustine to Kierkegaard to Martin Buber. These people have written, and written well, on the theological aspect of one's own death. Psychologically, one might look to Freud's later works regarding the "death drive" (i.e. Beyond the Pleasure Principle), to Jung's work on the relationship between archetypes and death, or more recently to Ernst Becker's well-known *The Denial of Death*. My point is that, as a sociologist, I have never looked to my discipline as a means to address my own relationship to death. When sociology becomes theological or psychological, it is just bad sociology. What my discipline does do well, and by extension the well-written and researched articles in this set, is to provide a contextual and historical framework from which to move forward into my own theological or psychological questions. As a final note, I hesitated even writing this "response." I so thoroughly agree with the first reviewer that people should look elsewhere to help them make sense of their own death. They should look to their communities, their family, their churches. They should look to works in their own traditions, along with other cultures, to make sense of the fact that they will die, and nothing can stop this. Yet sociology enters where social disruption begins, and in this regard, the question of why death has become so separated from our daily lives is the domain of sociological analysis. Neither theology nor psychology has been able to adequately address this question. Thus, a "sociological" analysis may lend little to our own relationship to death. On the other hand, it may (ironically) serve to frame and define the very notion that death has become untenable, unapproachable, un-thinkable. The notion that this has not always been true; this is what the disciplines of sociology and history can do, if they do it well.

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. *Reductionism Strikes Again* By D. Becker Though I agree with this book's "diagnosis" of the field of death and dying—that it has become "intellectually unmanageable" and that an attempt should be made to aggregate, consolidate, classify etc the plethora of materials related to the subject I think this book fails to do accomplish such. Certainly, As Ernest Becker states in his classic: *The Denial of Death* that we should fashion something out of ourselves and offer it to the life instinct—this should be done after one has undergone a thorough process of contemplating death. This book, in my estimation has failed to undergo a thorough process of contemplating the many facets of man's encounter with death despite its asseverations to the contrary. This book covers a wide range of subjects but does so superficially and focuses largely on the social aspects of death—AIDs, Funerals, Hospice, death education, mortality rates, ghosts, the death awareness movement, death in popular culture, life insurance, social construction of death, terrorism, capital punishment, etc. The social aspects of the death system are emphasized without a thorough understanding of the individual as an agentic self interacting with the elements of the death system in the book—suggesting a belief that the contributors believe in sociological determinism. Conspicuously absent from this book is the intrapsychic perspective and the many contributions to our understanding from depth psychology. The role of the body image, the stimulus barrier, habits, the sense of aliveness, the nonhuman environment—absent. Howard Gardner in a recent book suggests what matters when it comes to learning is not the understanding of others but one's own understanding. This book is not based on helping individuals gain their own unique understanding of death but merely in an instructionistic fashion shows the understanding of experts. This book reinforces the modern approach to death in that it in a Procrustean and reductionistic manner approaches the subject without a sense of how the individual might use it to construct a better understanding of themselves as authentic individuals who can reconstruct their own orientation to death. At the end of each article is a section for concluding remarks. I think readers are better served by providing the "scaffolding" for individualized explorations of death rather than tacitly assume what counts is what the experts say about death and dying and not how such can be used by individuals in an authentic manner.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Excellent Reference book on Thanatology* By MR This is an exhaustive research and reference tool for anyone working in the industry. The only sad thing (and this is a small point) is that it is starting to show its age. But most of the articles are timeless in their value.

Dying is a social as well as physiological phenomenon. Each society characterizes and, consequently, treats death and dying in its own individual ways that differ markedly. These particular patterns of death and dying engender modal cultural responses, and such institutionalized behavior has familiar, economical, educational, religious, and political implications. The *Handbook of Death and Dying* takes stock of the vast literature in the field of thanatology, arranging and synthesizing what has been an unwieldy body of knowledge into a concise, yet comprehensive reference work. This two-volume handbook will provide direction and momentum to the study of death-related behavior for many years to come. Key Features More than 100 contributors representing authoritative expertise in a diverse array of disciplines Anthropology Family Studies History Law Medicine Mortuary Science Philosophy Psychology Social work Sociology Theology A distinguished editorial board of leading scholars and researchers in the field More than 100 definitive essays covering almost every dimension of death-related behavior Comprehensive and inclusive, exploring concepts and social patterns within the larger topical concern Journal article length essays that address topics with appropriate detail Multidisciplinary and cross-cultural coverage

From Booklist Although the U.S. is considered a death-denying society, a focus on understanding the social and cultural issues around death has been gathering momentum since the 1960s and 1970s, a result of demographic changes, medical advancements and resulting ethical issues, and other factors. Topics in the Handbook of Death and Dying are presented as a collection of 103 comprehensive essays clustered in 10 general areas. The field of death studies is multidisciplinary; the more than 100 contributors are academics in sociology, psychology, social work, theology, history, medicine, law, and other areas of inquiry as well as practitioners in medicine, law, public policy, and mortuary sciences. Essays are gathered under general rubrics: in the first volume the section "Death in the Cultural Context" treats issues in confronting death, with essays on fear of death, death in popular culture, spiritualism, and more. The 12 essays that make up "Death in the Social Context" consider topics such as trends in mortality, accidental death, and terrorism. Suicide, capital punishment, euthanasia, and the hospice movement are among other topics in the first volume. The second volume deals with the response to death--the social ceremonies, the different ways of disposing of bodies, and the experiences of bereavement and survivorship. Ten essays on various aspects of the legalities of death are followed by a section on the response to death in literature, music, and art. The substantive essays are generally between 9 to 15 pages, with extensive bibliographies. A very deep and detailed index, close to 50 pages, easily leads the reader to more specific information. The single-volume Encyclopedia of Death and Dying (Routledge, 2000) is much less comprehensive. Death and the Afterlife: A Cultural Encyclopedia (ABC-CLIO, 2000) deals with the funeral and afterlife beliefs of various cultures. In breadth and heft, the Macmillan Encyclopedia of Death and Dying (2003) is most similar to the Handbook of Death and Dying. It is in a more traditional encyclopedic format with a mix of brief and longer entries. One can find similar information in both, and the two works share many of the same contributors, but the Handbook is perhaps more scholarly overall in tone. Both works are excellent and highly recommended. Although each has its strengths and slight differences in coverage (including the quirky--Elvis sightings in Macmillan, taxidermy as art in the Handbook), smaller libraries may be satisfied with the Macmillan work if it is already in the reference collection. RBB Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "Excellent and highly recommended." -- Booklist "" "" Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the 'unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature' on death studies organized and integrated. "" "" -- M.K. Hartung b Well researched with lengthy bibliographies . . . The index is rich with See and See Also references . . . Its multidisciplinary nature makes it an excellent addition to academic collections. b -- LIBRARY JOURNAL ??? Well researched with lengthy bibliographies . . . The index is rich with See and See Also references . . . Its multidisciplinary nature makes it an excellent addition to academic collections. ??? -- LIBRARY JOURNAL "" Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the 'unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature' on death studies organized and integrated. "" -- M.K. Hartung "CHOICE" "This is a well-researched and truly scholarly work that will be a classic in thanatology, the study of death and dying, for years to come. The Handbook of Death Dying is highly recommended for public, academic, undergraduate, graduate, and medical libraries." -- Lynn M. McMains "American Reference Books Annual" "Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the 'unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature' on death studies organized and integrated. Highly recommended for all collections. -- CHOICE" "Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the 'unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature' on death studies organized and integrated. "" -- M.K. Hartung "CHOICE" "Excellent and highly recommended." -- Booklist This is a singular reference tool . . . essential for academic libraries. -- Reference Services Quarterly "Sage's two-volume Handbook of Death Dying, a 2003 RUSA Best Reference, has a place in most reference collections, but it is almost erroneous to call it a handbook. Its scholarly essays are comprehensive and integrate individual concepts. And, like those in any encyclopedia, they have conclusion sections and further reading lists, so it makes sense to keep it in reference. What's more, resources on this topic are hard to come by." -- Mark L. Shores (07/13/2006) Well researched with lengthy bibliographies . . . The index is rich with See and See Also references . . . Its multidisciplinary nature makes it an excellent addition to academic collections. -- LIBRARY JOURNAL "Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the 'unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature' on death studies organized and integrated." -- M.K. Hartung "CHOICE" "Sage's two-volume Handbook of Death Dying, a 2003 RUSA Best Reference, has a place in most reference collections, but it is almost erroneous to call it a handbook. Its scholarly essays are comprehensive and integrate individual concepts. 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collections.---LIBRARY JOURNAL -Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the 'unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature' on death studies organized and integrated.---M.K. Hartung -CHOICE --This is a well-researched and truly scholarly work that will be a classic in thanatology, the study of death and dying, for years to come. The Handbook of Death Dying is highly recommended for public, academic, undergraduate, graduate, and medical libraries.---Lynn M. McMMain -American Reference Books Annual --Excellent and highly recommended.---Booklist-Sage's two-volume Handbook of Death Dying, a 2003 RUSA Best Reference, has a place in most reference collections, but it is almost erroneous to call it a handbook. Its scholarly essays are comprehensive and integrate individual concepts. And, like those in any encyclopedia, they have conclusion sections and further reading lists, so it makes sense to keep it in reference. What's more, resources on this topic are hard to come by.---Mark L. Shores (07/13/2006) Well researched with lengthy bibliographies . . . The index is rich with See and See Also references . . . Its multidisciplinary nature makes it an excellent addition to academic collections. (LIBRARY JOURNAL)Researchers and students in many social sciences and humanities disciplines, the health and legal professions, and mortuary science will find the Handbook of Death and Dying valuable. Lay readers will also appreciate the Handbooks wide-ranging coverage of death-related topics. Recommended for academic, health sciences, and large public libraries. (E-STREAMS) "Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the unwidely corpus of knowledge and literature on death studies organized and integrated." (M.K. Hartung CHOICE)"This is a well-researched and truly scholarly work that will be a classic in thanatology, the study of death and dying, for years to come. The Handbook of Death Dying is highly recommended for public, academic, undergraduate, graduate, and medical libraries." (Lynn M. McMMain American Reference Books Annual)"Excellent and highly recommended." (Booklist)Students, professionals, and scholars in the social sciences and health professions are fortunate to have the unwieldy corpus of knowledge and literature on death studies organized and integrated. Highly recommended for all collections. (CHOICE)This is a singular reference tool . . . essential for academic libraries. (Reference User Services Quarterly)"Sages two-volume Handbook of Death Dying, a 2003 RUSA Best Reference, has a place in most reference collections, but it is almost erroneous to call it a handbook. Its scholarly essays are comprehensive and integrate individual concepts. And, like those in any encyclopedia, they have conclusion sections and further reading lists, so it makes sense to keep it in reference. Whats more, resources on this topic are hard to come by." (Mark L. Shores 2006-07-13)