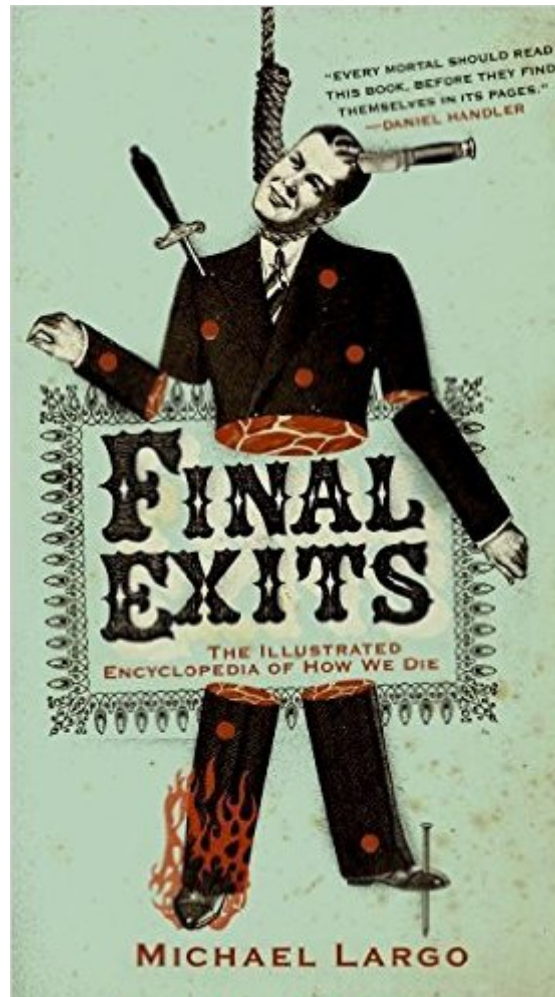


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Final Exits: The Illustrated Encyclopedia Of How We Die



Synopsis

To die, kick the bucket, to meet your Maker, dead as a doornail, get whacked, smoked, bite the dust, sleep with the fishes, go six feet underâwhatever death is called, it's going to happen. In 1789 Ben Franklin wrote, "In this world nothing is certain but death and taxes." Death remains a certainty. But how do we die? It's the enormous variety of how that enlivens final exits. According to death certificates, in 1700 there were less than 100 causes of death. Today there are 3,000. With each advance of technology, people find new ways to become deceased, often causing trends that peak in the first year. People are now killed by everything, from cell phones, washing machines, lawn mowers and toothpicks, to the boundless catalog of manâmade medicines. In *Final Exits* the causes of deathâbizarre or commonâare alphabetically arranged and include actual accounts of people, both famous and ordinary, who unfortunately died that way. (Ants, bad words, Bingo, bean bag chairs, flying cows, frozen toilets, hiccups, lipstick, moray eels, road kill, starfish, and toupees are only some of the more unusual causes.)

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Customer Reviews

I really wanted to like this book! There are just too many errors in the book to take it seriously. Most of them are minor (he states a pair of aces is known as the "Dead Mans' Hand, which is really 2 pair, aces and eights), but some are pretty big. He somehow consolidates the Order of the Solar Temple with the UFO cult "Heaven's Gate." They're both cults famous for mass suicides, but they're definitely different groups. I quickly realized that I couldn't trust his information, and it took a lot of the fun out of reading this book. Also, it's kind of scattershot and random. The blurb about children under

3 choking on chewing gum wasn't under children, or choking or even chewing gum, it was under "Rice Cakes." The bit about deaths during bridge construction wasn't under construction or bridges, it was all somehow under "Hoover Dam." This was repeated over and over, throughout the book. What a disappointment. With better editing and fact-checking, this would be a fascinating book. As it is, it's a waste of time and money

I checked this book out of the library, thank God. If I had bought it, I would have been furious. It contains so many falsities and errors that I could not make it through a third of the book. It reads like the author lifted his material straight off the Internet without checking any facts at all and merely repeated time-worn canards like covering the skin with paint a la Goldfinger will smother you. Hello, Mythbusters busted that one. This book contains poor research, sloppy writing (affect for effect; wrong!) and typos. The only reason I gave it one star is because it was a really good idea. Unfortunately, the execution did not live up to the design, and the book was an extreme disappointment. I would like to see the author revise this and release a better-researched, corrected edition. Then perhaps I might even buy it. But as it stands, I don't think so. As a writer myself it pains me to give such a poor review. Possibly the author can learn something here and improve his research skills. It really was a good idea, Michael. :(If you must read it, look for it at your local library.

As another reviewer stated, I really wanted to like this book. I'm leery of books that offer quick bites of trivia, knowing that so many stories and legends can frequently be skewed and presented as facts. Unfortunately, this is the case with this book. :(I was impressed with the long bibliography at the end, and assumed at first that the author must have done his homework, but it just doesn't follow. (For example, Carmen Miranda didn't die on stage during a performance--that's an urban legend. And Vincent Van Gogh didn't die from syphilis--he died from a gunshot wound). Many of the number statistics that the author throws out to the readers are contradictory as well, and just don't make sense. It's a fun, easy read, but not knowing what to believe took away the true enjoyment for me.

Mike Largo has to be the laziest or most-impatient writer on the planet. Two of his books, including this one, are stocked with fantastic material that is derailed by his astoundingly shoddy research. It's almost like he writes straight out of the almost-right material in his head, then publishes his first draft. The idea is terrific - write an A-Z compilation of the deaths of famous people and of the myriad

ways that human beings contrive to shuffle off this mortal coil. Whether choking on chewing gum, falling off roller-coasters (while "surfing," no less), cramping from the bends or being boiled by hungry cannibals, the means of flatlining are many and varied. This book, like "God's Lunatics" also suffers from a lack of an index and a jumbled way of categorizing topics. But worst of all is the INCREDIBLY sloppy fact-checking. Largo's World War II started in 1940 - which would surprise the Poles, who were invaded on September 1, 1939, and the Americans, who entered the war in December 1941. In his Battle of the Little Bighorn, Crazy Horse attacks Custer, not (correctly) the other way round. And when he cites death statistics, it's impossible to know whether he is referring to fatalities in the US or worldwide. And these are not small problems! Every page and just about every article are rich in easily-discernible errors, fuzzy factoids and unrelated, unlabeled illustrations. If it wasn't for the fact that the entries are rich and varied, the book would be unreadable. Advice to Largo: before publishing again, hire a bright high-school kid to revise your brain dump.

Having just read the book, I picked up the "Dead Man's Hand" error, too. However Jen L-G correction was also incorrect. The Dead Man's Hand is a full house, eights over aces. The rest of the complaints I shared. A proof-reader and an editor would have helped tremendously.

I should have read the reviews a little more carefully before I bought this book. Kinda booooooring....a moderate amount of misinformation. Not that the misinformation mattered. This book wasn't really educational, fun, or informative. Just- blah. I did get my copy for a penny plus shipping. Worth the price, I guess.

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