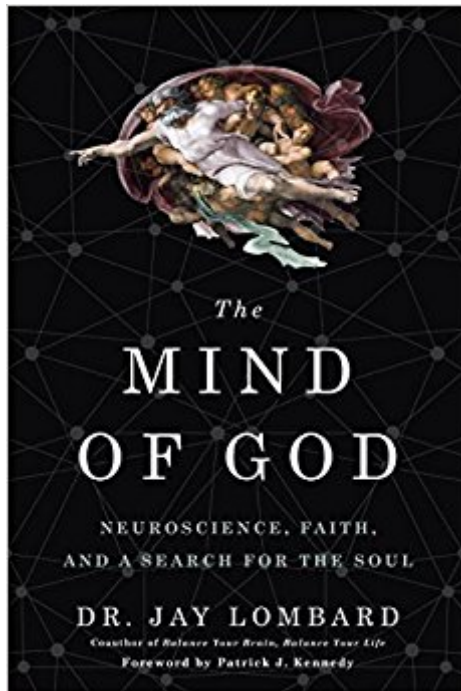




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The Mind Of God: Neuroscience, Faith, And A Search For The Soul



Synopsis

For fans of Deepak Chopra, Rudy Tanzi, and Andrew Newberg. A renowned behavioral neurologist provides insights to some of the most curious spiritual questions we all face. Is there a God? It's a question billions of people have asked since the dawn of time. You would think by now we'd have a satisfactory, universal answer. No such luck. Or maybe we do and we just need to look in the right place. For Dr. Jay Lombard that place is the brain, and more importantly the mind, that center of awareness and consciousness that creates reality. In *The Mind of God*, Dr. Lombard employs case studies from his own behavioral neurology practice to explore the spiritual conundrums that we all ask ourselves: What is the nature of God? Does my life have purpose? What's the meaning of our existence? Are we free? What happens to us when we die? For Lombard, these metaphysical questions are a jumping-off point for exploring the brain in search of the seat of the soul. It is neuroscience, the author contends, and how we and our brains interpret what's going on around us that can lead us to a deeper and more fulfilling faith. Mixing his personal experiences in the medical field (including compelling cases such as the male patient who really thought he was pregnant and a woman who literally scared herself to death) along with his own visionary insight into spiritual experience, Lombard has much to tell us about the nature and power of belief and what we can do to focus our beliefs in a positive direction. If you want to find more meaning in your life or are searching for a deeper understanding of why we believe what we believe, then this book can lead to an exciting transformation in the way you see and understand the world around you. With cutting-edge research and provocative case studies, renowned behavioral neurologist provides insights to some of the most curious spiritual questions of mortality.

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Customer Reviews

★ Starred Review "Contextualizing scientific precepts with humanizing personal accounts of psychiatric patients and family members Lombard erects a much-needed bridge between science and faith." -- Booklist "The Mind of God is an elegant and wise book that leads us to wonder about and fashion our own unique answers to some of the most baffling and vital of questions." *Psychology Today* "The Mind of God is inspiring, insightful and thought provoking. This book will awaken new connections in our understanding of the exhilarating relationship between reality, reason, and faith." •
• Deepak Chopra, MD, and New York Times Bestseller of *How to Know God* "Dr. Jay Lombard beautifully illustrates in *The Mind of God* that the answer to how our brain brings us the experience of mind and the universe lies at the very interface of science and faith. No book has ever addressed these important questions more reasonably and masterfully!" •
• Rudolph E. Tanzi, PhD, co-author of the New York Times bestseller, *Super Brain*, the Joseph P. and Rose F. Kennedy Professor of Neurology at Harvard University and Director of the Genetics and Aging Research Unit at Massachusetts General Hospital "Dr. Lombard's deep knowledge of the brain and its intricate mechanism helps us to unveil the mystery of the divine and the reality of our soul. This book is highly recommended to all who seek to know who they are, pursuing in an honest, simple and open way, the modern and the ancient." •
• Menas Kafatos, co-author of the New York Times bestseller, *You Are the Universe* and Endowed Professor of Computational Physics "An extraordinary synthesis of neuroscience, religion, faith and wisdom written with the clarity and compassion of Oliver Sacks." •
• Lloyd I. Sederer, MD, Adjunct Professor, Columbia School of Public Health; Chief Medical Officer, NYS Office of Mental Health

Dr. Jay Lombard, a Board-certified Neurologist, is the co-founder, chief scientific officer, and medical director for Genomind, a precision medicine company for patients with psychiatric and neurological conditions. The company is committed to discovering the underlying causes of neuropsychiatric disorders, and supports the development of personalized medicine for clinical practice. Dr. Lombard has developed a genetic diagnostic test, and has been granted several patents for biomarker diagnostics in psychiatry and neurology. The technology he developed has

been regarded by several key opinion leaders as one of the most significant breakthroughs in psychiatry.

not convincing if you've read up on atheism

Cannot agree with the good doctor.

A little scattered in it's presentation of ideas. Thought provoking.

This book was at times inspiring, at other times confusing, and yet at some other times infuriating. I will not cover every single aspect of the book in this review because I do not want to give too much away. Book reviews are tricky this way. Also, it is always best for you to make your own mind about it. Thus, I will limit myself to a few good and a few not-so-good aspects of the book. I had very high hopes for this book when I began reading it. The book takes off with a very poignant story about the author examining the brain of a deceased child. A very powerful way to start! This is actually the part that made me purchase the book once I read the first few pages of the free preview. This was a very emotional story, a story that sets the stage for some of the "Big Questions" that keep most of us awake in the middle of the night. Questions of transcendence, on how the brain makes us who we are, and where do we go (if anywhere at all) when we leave our human existence, among many other such questions. Right there, this is a book that would interest most people. There are other parts of the book that are very moving as well, particularly when he talked about his late father. Many of us can relate to these feelings. The book is in parts witty and funny, and it would have been a much more enjoyable reading if it had not been for its sheer mishandling of basic scientific principles. The book subtitle is "Neuroscience, Faith, and a Search for the Soul". As it happens, the neuroscience part is fairly minimal, there is a lot about faith, although is more metaphysical musings at best, and I guess that the search of the soul was implicit; it was certainly not self-evident to me from what I read. As expected from the author's medical (specifically neurology) background, his brief explorations of the anatomy and functions of the brain were pretty good (at least at the beginning of the book). As he veers off his own area of expertise, things begin to stand in much flimsier ground. Here are some examples: Page 37: "Our capacity for empathy requires belief... that all life... has purpose and meaning." Not exactly. I know more than one person who does not believe in any kind of ultimate meaning in the universe and yet they show perfectly good empathy in every sense of the word. Page 40: "If life is only about the survival of the fittest..." Anyone with the most

rudimentary understanding of evolutionary theory is aware that the aforementioned phrase has no meaning even within technical discussions of evolution. Page 55: "As per the laws of thermodynamics, all living biological systems seek their most stable state." This is simply not true. The phenomenon of life is far, quite far from chemical equilibrium. In fact, when a biological system reaches equilibrium, it dies. there's even bumper stickers about it ("Old chemists don't die... they just reach equilibrium"). There are also some assorted non-scientific statements, which are simply unapologetic speculations using scientific words, obviously targeted to a non-scientific audience. For example, page 98: "Purpose is coded right into the smallest subatomic components of our very being.", page 104: "...knowing a god of empathy and compassion whose very DNA is reflected in our lives.", page 110: "Thus, each individual is the realization of a certain concept within the divine intelligence." There are many, many more... As a neuroscientist, one of the parts that shocked me the most was the wrong description of what the hippocampus (a part of the brain) does; look it up before reading the relevant part of the book and compare both explanations... You'll see what I mean. There is a part that I truly think was an oversight that betrays a lack of thorough proofreading. On page 168, the author states that the premise of the book is that "What is essential is invisible to the human eye". Does this paraphrased sentence remind you of something? It did remind me indeed and yet there was no mention of Mr. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, none whatsoever. The book's notes are otherwise pretty detailed; why this oversight? I know I am nitpicking, I am aware of that, but since the phrase was put between quote marks in the book, I can only assume that an attribution was intended, yet was never included. Any self-respecting editor would have caught that. All authors have an agenda, implicit or explicit, and that is all right. Throughout the book, the sense I got was to reject the current scientific paradigms, with subtle and not so subtle barbs at Charles Darwin and the process of biological evolution and admiringly allusions to intelligent design (ID, the "flagship" phrase of ID, "irreducible complexity" is mentioned in the book more than once). Enough said. I could nitpick many more parts of the book, but I think that I have made my point already. To conclude, you may enjoy this book if you do not care too much about the seriousness and thoroughness of the stated topic of the book. Neuroscience, faith and the soul must be related somehow, but this relationship is not truly explored in this book. Note: A slightly longer version of this review was originally posted in my blog, Baldscientist.

Early in the book when the author says that the earth was "a custom-made planet that is ... sublimely ordered to afford the probability of life", "to accommodate us" warning bells went off. A little later, he describes evolution as "survival of the fittest", and as such could not have produced

empathy and compassion in humans. The conclusion is that empathy and compassion are somehow proof of God. This understanding of evolution is immature, and simple wrong. Compassion and empathy would be necessary in human evolution because we need each other in order to survive. Evolution is not social Darwinism. In general, the assumptions made by the author have no basis in anything but his personal beliefs. If you are looking for a book with solid, scientific input that leaves you pondering the possible link between the brain and God, don't buy this book.

When I saw this book the title really inspired me because how often do you see the words "science" and "God" together? Jay Lombard has a completely compelling viewpoint and when he talks about faith he is not promoting any one religion. I felt that at times his logical arguments reached a yet unknown level of brilliance. Jay Lombard has a creative and passionate writing style and his stories are told with a sense of sensitivity and understanding. He really seems to know about the way the mind works when people are ill. So all his case studies are fascinating. I learned several things I would have otherwise not have known like how people who think negatively are really killing off their brain cells. No wonders negative thinking leads to depression and worse. I also learned that compassion promotes brain regeneration. For those two pieces of information this book was worth reading. What I love about this author is that he is not scared to address questions like: Is there a God? Do humans have souls? Do we have free will? What is the meaning of life? Is there life after death? What is the mind? These are things people really do contemplate on a daily basis and for most these answers are found in their religion. Since Jay Lombard is not promoting any one religion his answers are interesting and well worth considering for the average person, religious or not. While this book is written in a way that is easy to understand I did feel some confusion on his belief of an afterlife. On one hand he talks about the dissolution of the person after death and on the other he says we live on. He doesn't seem to acknowledge near-death experiences or even talk about them and for that reason he does not have very many comments on heaven or hell. At times this book is however very calming as it is nice to have a conversation with an intelligent author who considers deep questions worthy of his time. Some of the topics he discusses include: evolution, nihilism, mirror neurons, dreams, immortality, existential angst and DNA. I could however not make out whether he considered creation a valid option. He seems to believe much more in evolution. But the book is not really about evolution and he briefly mentions it now and then. So I found this book completely worth reading. It has some profound moments that really resonate with your soul. At times the writing borders on poetic. I'm happy I found this book as it was a very enjoyable reading experience. I'd read other books by this author for sure. ~The Rebecca Review

Well meaning but not well reasoned or well written or rigorous intellectually. Meandering and incoherent, lots of stories that don't really prove any point. The negative reviews here are worth reading. The book is not. You should be suspicious when you see that a book is recommended by Deepak Chopra. Midwest Independent Research, educational websites. Mysticism, mwir-mysticism.blogspot. There are book lists here.

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