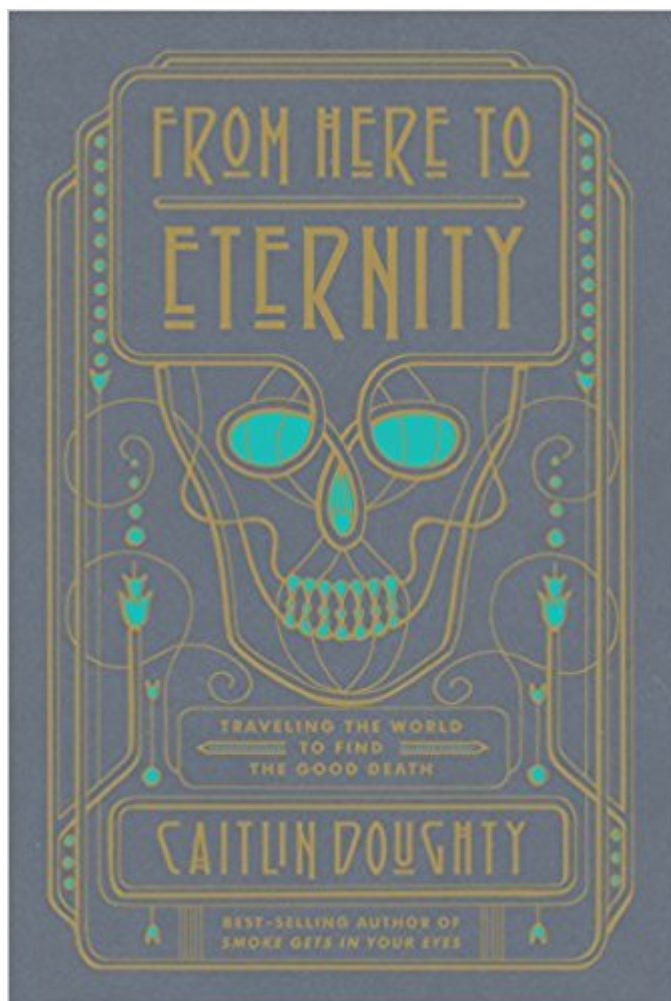


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# From Here To Eternity: Traveling The World To Find The Good Death



## Synopsis

The best-selling author of *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* expands our sense of what it means to treat the dead with a dignity. Fascinated by our pervasive fear of dead bodies, mortician Caitlin Doughty set out to discover how other cultures care for the dead. *From Here to Eternity* is an immersive global journey that introduces compelling, powerful rituals almost entirely unknown in America. In rural Indonesia, she watches a man clean and dress his grandfather's mummified body, which has resided in the family home for two years. In La Paz, she meets Bolivian natitas (cigarette-smoking, wish-granting human skulls), and in Tokyo she encounters the Japanese kotsuage ceremony, in which relatives use chopsticks to pluck their loved-ones' bones from cremation ashes. With boundless curiosity and gallows humor, Doughty vividly describes decomposed bodies and investigates the world's funerary history. She introduces deathcare innovators researching body composting and green burial, and examines how varied traditions, from Mexico's Día de los Muertos to Zoroastrian sky burial help us see our own death customs in a new light. Doughty contends that the American funeral industry sells a particular—and, upon close inspection, peculiar—set of respectful rites: bodies are whisked to a mortuary, pumped full of chemicals, and entombed in concrete. She argues that our expensive, impersonal system fosters a corrosive fear of death that hinders our ability to cope and mourn. By comparing customs, she demonstrates that mourners everywhere respond best when they help care for the deceased, and have space to participate in the process. Exquisitely illustrated by artist Landis Blair, *From Here to Eternity* is an adventure into the morbid unknown, a story about the many fascinating ways people everywhere have confronted the very human challenge of mortality. 45 illustrations

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

• Caitlin Doughty is razor sharp, and writes about death with exceptional clarity and style. From Here to Eternity manages to be both an extremely funny travelogue and a deeply moving book about what death means to us all. • - Dylan Thuras, co-founder of Atlas Obscura • A thought-provoking book about the complicated, fascinating world of funerary practices. Unless you and your friends are immortal, this book pertains to you. • - A. J. Jacobs • Doughty finds the humanity in others cultures' relationship with death that seems to be lacking in ours. • - Justin Caffier, Vice • [Doughty's] fascinating tour of rituals contains liturgies that readers will surely observe as rare, macabre, unbelievable, ancient, and precious • sometimes simultaneously. • - Kirkus • In her jocular but reverential tone • | Doughty doesn't offer a simple morbid travelogue; instead, she digs into diverse death experiences with deep veneration and examines ties to socioeconomic, status, female identity, and religion. • - Booklist

Mortician Caitlin Doughty • host and creator of Ask a Mortician and the New York Times best-selling author of Smoke Gets in Your Eyes • founded The Order of the Good Death. She lives in Los Angeles, where she runs her nonprofit funeral home, Undertaking LA.

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