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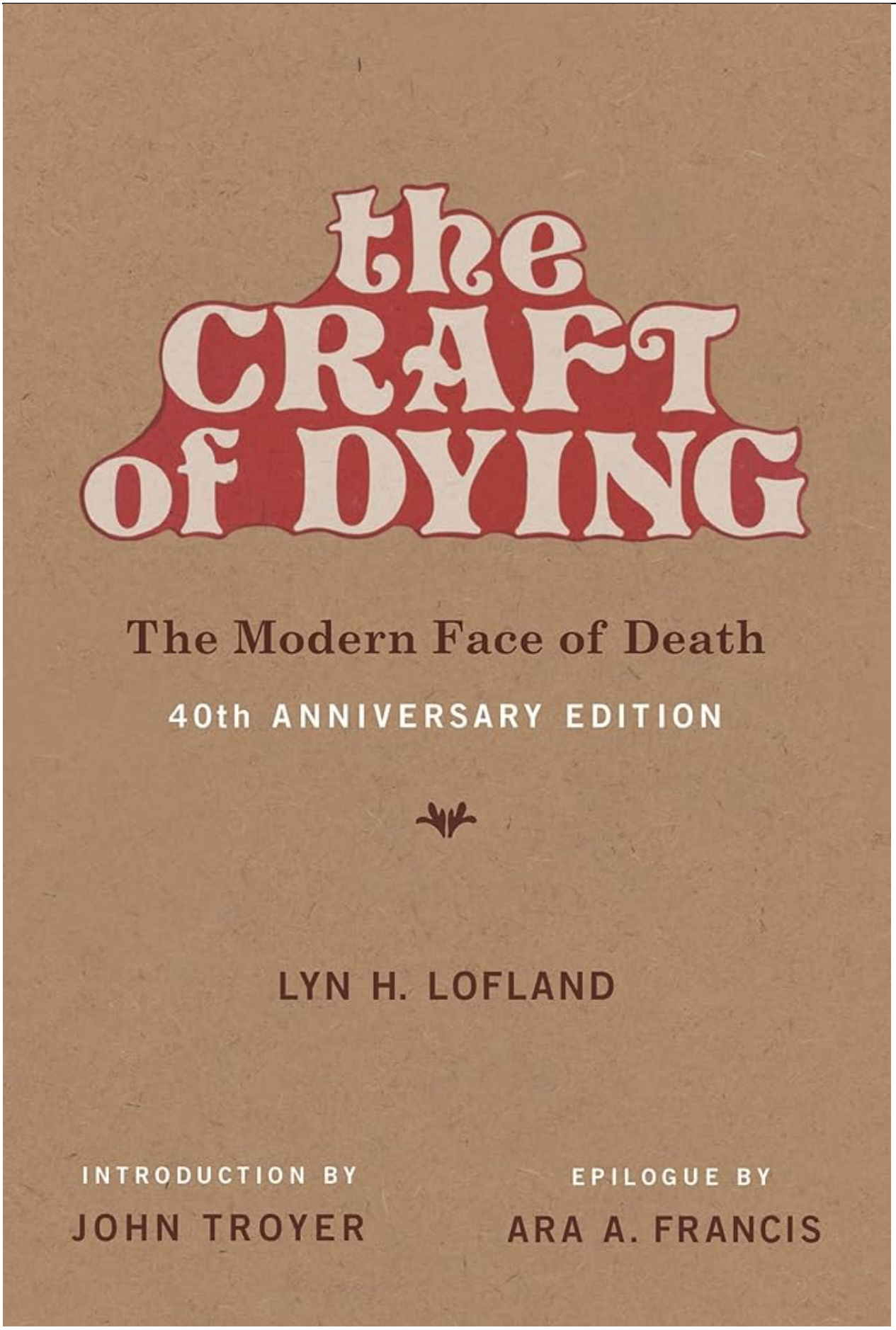
The Craft of Dying: The Modern Face of Death


the CRAFT of DYING
The Modern Face of Death
40th ANNIVERSARY EDITION
LYN H. LOFLAND
INTRODUCTION BY
JOHN TROYER
EPILOGUE BY
ARA A. FRANCIS

Lyn H. Lofland (40th Anniversary Edition). 2019. The MIT Press. 135p.

This extended thanatology (the scientific study of death and the losses brought about as a result) essay outlines key concepts associated with death and, increasingly in recent decades, the effects of its prolongation.

Despite the fact that ‘death cannot be believed, magicked nor scienced away’, the book explores the bureaucratization and secularization of death and taboo: death is “used, abused and greatly exaggerated”.

Lofland outlines a conceptual framework to demonstrate different angles to understand death: space, population, knowledge and stance. She discusses the ‘happy death’ movement which emerged in the 1970s and aimed to “establish a new order of life” to address death differently: talking about it, rearranging it, and legislating it. She suggests the movement has three structural components: immortality, positivity and expressivity.

Above all, the book underlines the importance of breaking the culture of silence around death, suggesting that engaging with the topic shows both a natural curiosity with the human condition as well as showing the benefits of ‘being prepared’ for ourselves and others close to us.

Plenna ??

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Translation disclaimer: Content originally written in English.