

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery

By Sam Kean

Download now

Read Online →

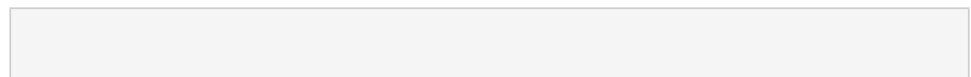
The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean

The author of the bestseller *The Disappearing Spoon* reveals the secret inner workings of the brain through strange but true stories.

Early studies of the human brain used a simple method: wait for misfortune to strike -- strokes, seizures, infectious diseases, horrendous accidents -- and see how victims coped. In many cases their survival was miraculous, if puzzling. Observers were amazed by the transformations that took place when different parts of the brain were destroyed, altering victims' personalities. Parents suddenly couldn't recognize their own children. Pillars of the community became pathological liars. Some people couldn't speak but could still sing.

In *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons*, Sam Kean travels through time with stories of neurological curiosities: phantom limbs, Siamese twin brains, viruses that eat patients' memories, blind people who see through their tongues. He weaves these narratives together with prose that makes the pages fly by, to create a story of discovery that reaches back to the 1500s and the high-profile jousting accident that inspired this book's title.* With the lucid, masterful explanations and razor-sharp wit his fans have come to expect, Kean explores the brain's secret passageways and recounts the forgotten tales of the ordinary people whose struggles, resilience, and deep humanity made neuroscience possible.

*"The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons" refers to the case of French king Henri II, who in 1559 was lanced through the skull during a joust, resulting in one of the most significant cases in neuroscience history. For hundreds of years scientists have gained important lessons from traumatic accidents and illnesses, and such misfortunes still represent their greatest resource for discovery.



 [Download The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The Histo ...pdf](#)

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery

By Sam Kean

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean

The author of the bestseller *The Disappearing Spoon* reveals the secret inner workings of the brain through strange but true stories.

Early studies of the human brain used a simple method: wait for misfortune to strike -- strokes, seizures, infectious diseases, horrendous accidents -- and see how victims coped. In many cases their survival was miraculous, if puzzling. Observers were amazed by the transformations that took place when different parts of the brain were destroyed, altering victims' personalities. Parents suddenly couldn't recognize their own children. Pillars of the community became pathological liars. Some people couldn't speak but could still sing.

In *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons*, Sam Kean travels through time with stories of neurological curiosities: phantom limbs, Siamese twin brains, viruses that eat patients' memories, blind people who see through their tongues. He weaves these narratives together with prose that makes the pages fly by, to create a story of discovery that reaches back to the 1500s and the high-profile jousting accident that inspired this book's title.* With the lucid, masterful explanations and razor-sharp wit his fans have come to expect, Kean explores the brain's secret passageways and recounts the forgotten tales of the ordinary people whose struggles, resilience, and deep humanity made neuroscience possible.

*"The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons" refers to the case of French king Henri II, who in 1559 was lanced through the skull during a joust, resulting in one of the most significant cases in neuroscience history. For hundreds of years scientists have gained important lessons from traumatic accidents and illnesses, and such misfortunes still represent their greatest resource for discovery.

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #156410 in Books
- Brand: Little Brown and Company
- Published on: 2014-05-06
- Released on: 2014-05-06
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.75" h x 1.50" w x 6.50" l, 1.40 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 416 pages

 **Download** [The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History ...pdf](#)

 **Read Online** [The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The Histo ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online **The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery** By Sam Kean

Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Science writer Kean explores the vagaries and inconsistencies of the human brain via diverting stories that chronicle medical science's fits and starts. To say these are diverting is, however, an oversimplification since their subjects—primarily unfortunate individuals with brain injuries—command sympathy if not empathy. Yet Kean's focus is on their contribution to the field of neuroscience along with, in too many instances, the misguided misinformation of the medical professionals who treated them. Take the case of France's King Henry II. When he lost his right eye plus a bit of his brain to a poorly aimed jousting spear, his physicians' limited knowledge of the brain's physiognomy cost him his life. Then there's President Garfield's assassin, Charles Guiteau, whose undiagnosed bipolar mind was further addled by syphilis and who, naturally . . . thought himself fit for politics. To pick up one of these stories is to lose oneself in them. Where does the brain end and the mind begin? Curious readers will find both brain and mind fully revved up while engaging with this powerfully appealing and thought-provoking work of neuroscience history. --Donna Chavez

Review

Longlisted for the 2015 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award

One of Amazon's Best Books of the Year: Science

One of *The A.V. Club's* Best Books of 2014

A Goodreads Choice Awards Finalist: Nonfiction

"This is Sam Kean's finest work yet, an entertaining and offbeat history of the brain populated with mad scientists, deranged criminals, geniuses, and wretched souls. *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons* is one of those books that will have you following your friends around, reading passages out loud, until they snatch the book away from you and read it for themselves. Good luck getting it back."?Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist*

"Put your Netflix queue on hold. Sam Kean's *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons* will command your full attention from the first page. It's not just an engaging guide to mysteries of existence; it's compelling story-telling for anyone with a taste for the bizarre and metaphysical."?William Poundstone, author of *Rock Breaks Scissors*

"In tale after tale, best-selling author Kean provides a fascinating, and at times gloriously gory, look at how early efforts in neurosurgery were essentially a medical guessing game.... Entertaining and quotable, Kean's writing is sharp, and each individual story brings the history of neuroscience to life. Compulsively readable, wicked scientific fun."?Kirkus

"Reading this collection is like touring a museum of neuroscience's most dramatic anomalies, each chapter taking us to a different place and time.... Kean's colloquial language and intimate voice bring all of this series of mini-histories to life -- all of which are sure to stimulate a wide range of brains."?Publishers Weekly

"[Kean] proves an able guide, connecting each story with the science behind it, always with an air of enthusiastic curiosity."?Kate Tuttle, *Boston Globe*

"[Kean's] strength lies in his storytelling, and in the humane combination of humor and compassion toward the strange life histories he pieces together.... Kean has a penchant for the kind of vivid description that makes one want to clutch one's head tenderly close."?Margaret Quamme, *Columbus Dispatch*

"To pick up one of these stories is to lose oneself in them. Where does the brain end and the mind begin? Curious readers will find both brain and mind fully revved up while engaging with this powerfully appealing and thought-provoking work of neuroscience history."?Donna Chavez, *Booklist*

"The author's skill in illuminating how the brain functions and malfunctions manifest themselves in people's lives makes for absorbing reading....These avowals ultimately raise weighty, compelling questions about the nature of identity and what it means to be human."?The Wall Street Journal

"Strokes, seizures, accidents: if they don't kill, they can traumatize the brain so badly that an individual's personality can be significantly changed. But, explains *New York Times* best-selling author of the terrific *The Violinist's Thumb*, early neuroscientists saw such traumas as an opportunity to study the brain's wondrous workings."?Library Journal, "Barbara's Picks"

"Beyond paying tribute to the scientific advances these patients made possible, Kean humanizes the patients themselves."?Scientific American

"After tackling DNA and the periodic table in his previous books, Kean has moved on to the human brain, which he dissects via dozens of vivid anecdotes.... His subtle meta touches are a heady delight."?Joe McGovern, *Entertainment Weekly*

"Sam Kean can spin a tale as well as any fiction writer....Kean is a rare writer who approaches science writing as a child would a playground at recess. It's a wide-open field full of possibilities, limited only by the surroundings and what our imaginations can do with them."?PopMatters

"In the capable hands of science writer Sam Kean, stories of brain injuries shine just a bit brighter, illuminating not only the interesting characters delivering bedside diagnoses or lying on the examination table, but general principles of scientific discovery that are still relevant today....Kean breathes life into the patients as well as the physicians and scientists tasked with understanding the injuries."?The Scientist

Kean is "science's premier storyteller, the man who regularly turns the history of science into sagas filled with adventure, mystery, fascinating people, and fun."?The Washington Post

"Entrancing.... Sam Kean burrows into the workings of an organ once deemed as unknowable as the far reaches of the galaxy, and does so with boyish charm, accessible language, a prodigious amount of enthusiasm and the sobering realization that throughout history a catastrophic brain injury has ghoulishly been the neuroscientists best friend."?James Macgowan, *Toronto Star*

"These stories are entertaining....But they're also illuminating, as Kean shows how each one advanced scientific knowledge."?Washingtonian

"Kean delves into a scientific world before modern technology, and tells the stories of people who had sudden changes in personality, felt phantom limbs, pathologically lied, and experienced other mysteries traced back to the brain. He does so with humor and humanity, making the mind-boggling history of neuroscience a fun read."?Nicole Dubowitz, *DCist*

"Crammed with curious anecdotes from neuroscience's gory past."? *Nature*

"Mesmerizing.... With a razor-edged wit and intriguing narrative, the pages are easily devoured, all while Kean explores the deepest labyrinths of the brain."? *Mellinda Hensley, Los Angeles Magazine*

"*Dueling Neurosurgeons* will confirm Kean's already-solid reputation as a writer who can make anything understandable and interesting.[...] Although hugely entertaining (perhaps especially so in this era of vampire and zombie fascination), Kean's book contains amazingly clear details about our brains."? *Winnipeg Free Press*

"Engrossing, cleverly narrated."? *Simon Lewsen, The Globe and Mail*

"Breezy, informal, entertaining stories that link what we now know of the nervous system to events and personalities of the past."? *James W. Kalat, American Psychological Association's PsycCRITIQUES*

About the Author

Sam Kean is the author of the *New York Times* bestsellers *The Disappearing Spoon* and *The Violinist's Thumb*. His work has appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Mental Floss*, *Slate*, and *New Scientist*, and has been featured on NPR's "Radiolab" and "All Things Considered."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Susan Burroughs:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in each and every way. By being competitive now, people have do something to make these individuals survives, being in the middle of the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a guide your ability to survive improve then having chance to stand than other is high. For you personally who want to start reading the book, we give you this specific *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* book as beginning and daily reading book. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Ronald Moffatt:

This *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* are reliable for you who want to be considered a successful person, why. The explanation of this *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* can be one of many great books you must have is definitely giving you more than just simple reading food but feed anyone with information that might be will shock your previous knowledge. This book is definitely handy, you can bring it almost everywhere and whenever your conditions both in e-book and printed ones. Beside that this *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* forcing you to have an enormous of experience including rich vocabulary, giving you trial of critical thinking that we understand it useful in your day pastime. So , let's have it and enjoy reading.

Maria Clyburn:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray anyone, why because this *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* e-book written by well-known writer who knows well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who have read the book. Written inside good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and publishing skill only for eliminate your own hunger then you still uncertainty *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* as good book not simply by the cover but also through the content. This is one guide that can break don't determine book by its deal with, so do you still needing one more sixth sense to pick this particular!? Oh come on your reading sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to yet another sixth sense.

Diane Joiner:

Reading a guide make you to get more knowledge from that. You can take knowledge and information from your book. Book is written or printed or highlighted from each source which filled update of news. Within this modern era like today, many ways to get information are available for an individual. From media social just like newspaper, magazines, science book, encyclopedia, reference book, book and comic. You can add your knowledge by that book. Ready to spend your spare time to open your book? Or just trying to find the *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* when you required it?

Download and Read Online *The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery* By Sam Kean #HEMQDZUCBA2

Read The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean for online ebook

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean books to read online.

Online The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean ebook PDF download

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean Doc

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean Mobipocket

The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean EPub

HEMQDZUCBA2: The Tale of the Dueling Neurosurgeons: The History of the Human Brain as Revealed by True Stories of Trauma, Madness, and Recovery By Sam Kean