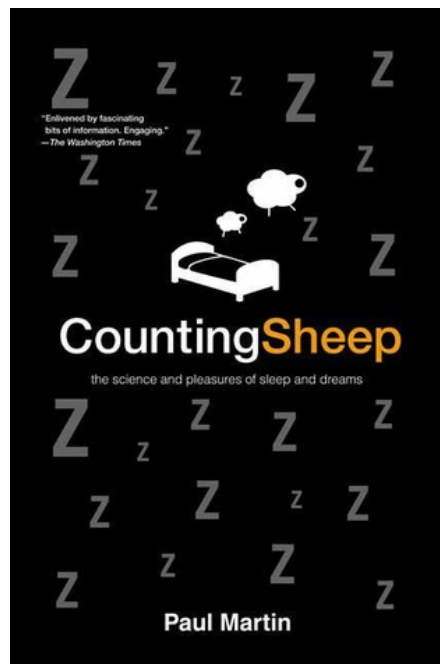




Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams

Paul R. Martin

Download now

Read Online ➔

Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams

Paul R. Martin

Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams Paul R. Martin

Does the early bird really catch the worm, or end up healthy, wealthy, and wise? Can some people really exist on just a few hours' sleep a night? Does everybody dream? Do fish dream? How did people cope before alarm clocks and caffeine? And is anybody getting enough sleep?

Even though we will devote a third of our lives to sleep, we still know remarkably little about its origins and purpose. Paul Martin's *Counting Sheep* answers these questions and more in this illuminating work of popular science. Even the wonders of yawning, the perils of sleepwalking, and the strange ubiquity of nocturnal erections are explained in full.

To sleep, to dream: *Counting Sheep* reflects the centrality of these activities to our lives and can help readers respect, understand, and extract more pleasure from that delicious time when they're lost to the world.

Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams Details

Date : Published November 1st 2005 by St. Martin's Griffin (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780312327446

Author : Paul R. Martin

Format : Paperback 432 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Science, Psychology, Popular Science

 [Download Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep an ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams
Paul R. Martin

From Reader Review Counting Sheep: The Science and Pleasures of Sleep and Dreams for online ebook

Rebecca says

Most of it is really interesting. A comprehensive account on just about everything we know or contemplate about sleep. A few parts were a bit boring, but for a non fiction intellectual book it is fun and easy.

Stuart says

Author Bio: Paul Martin is a Cambridge University graduate with a PhD in behavioural biology. Paul has authored several books all focusing on the pleasure aspects of behaviour and life (sleep, happiness and food) and has also written about mental illness.

Summary of the Book:

Counting Sheep is a book all about sleep and its various benefits, problems and history, that definitely did not have me nodding off. Everything comes down to sleep, health, life satisfaction, learning and memory. This book will change your understanding of how you spend one third of your life.

I learned plenty about the life under the covers and in the land of Nod, Paul Martin has put together a great book with one major message to get across to us all, we need more sleep and he has the knowledge and the advice to help.

Paul Martin works hard to get his point across to the reader, but he does a great job. The book is separated into 7 parts with a total of 17 chapters. Each chapter had sub sections, each with their own valid piece of information, each accompanied with a quote that relates to the subject matter. I enjoyed the format of this book, it was broken up nicely and made for comfortable reading, I didn't once find myself confused about what PM was talking about or his overall point.

Counting Sheep is a journey through all the elements of sleep, from how humans and animals actually go to sleep, what happens if we don't get enough (which we don't), dreams and how to control them, sleep disorders, cultural sleep habits and the dangers of sleep deprivation in everyday life.

PM shares with us the medical side of sleep, with lots of different terminology and jargon that I felt added some extra depth to the overall learning capabilities with this book, I like to learn whilst I read and this definitely taught me some important pieces of information. One of my favourite being that a Uvulopalatopharyngoplasty is a surgery to remove the Uvula to alleviate the symptoms of sleep apnoea (a deadly sleep disorder).

PM pulls out all the stops, he delves into the evolutionary history of sleep, why we snore, how we move in our sleep, and how our senses can affect our dreams while we are asleep. Dreaming and its capabilities is a whole other portion of the book and it is very interesting, especially the advice on how to achieve lucid dreams and how to enjoy your sleep to the maximum.

My main criticism of this book is it seemed that PM needed to use historical figures and their various stories to make his point at each stage, I feel that he over did it with the stories, they were interesting at first but they

seem to dilute what he was trying to say at times. I found what PM had to say was interesting, he is clearly esteemed enough to make his own points but he felt that stories, quotes and references to historical figures maybe gave the material that extra gusto, but I thought PM was doing a great job by himself.

This really is a book for everyone, there is information for babies, children, teenagers, men, women, the older generation and for animals too. My main positive aspect of this book is that Paul Martin genuinely wants to help people. He gives advice to the sleep deprived, new parents and the general population on how to deal with their sleep problems and that allow them to live a better lives when they are resolved (though there is not much you can do as a parent of a baby, been there...totally worth it though!)

PM has written a very influential book that is a must read by everyone, it will change your understanding of an evolutionary activity that you will spend one third of your life participating in, get learning and enjoy sleep, so you can enjoy life to the fullest.

9/10

If you enjoyed this review, like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, on Goodreads, and see our posts on Amazon US and UK. We love books and will continue to do so, so enjoy them with us. Main Blog: www.alwaystrustinbooks.blogspot.co.uk

Dimitris Hall says

Counting Sheep is one of my favourite non-fiction books. In "western" society, sleep is commonly downplayed as wasted time. Counting Sheep will probably make you change your opinion on the matter forever. It underlines the pleasures and biological functions of sleep, the stages of sleep (did you know that your night's sleep is divided into "cycles" of 90 minutes of deep and REM sleep?) as well as going in depth on the function of dreams, lucid dreaming, lying surface culture, sleep deprivation, caffeine, the modern notion of "sleep is a waste of time" itself... It is potentially a life changing book and one I would enjoy reading again and again. I cannot recommend it enough to this world of jittery, sleep-deprived maniacs!

In addition: Caught from the blog post I wrote right after I read the book more than a year ago:

Picking up books on random, fascinating subjects as I sometimes do, this summer I got a book on sleep called "Counting Sheep". Alexandra used to mistakenly call it "Science of Sleep", like the movie. I thought it was funny mixing the two names up! On a side note, we still haven't watched "Science of Sleep" in its entirety.

"Counting Sheep" is the ultimate book on this 1/3 of our lives when we "go comatose while hallucinating vividly". REM sleep, which is the scientific term for dreams, actually occurs for just 25% of sleep in adults. The rest is NREM (non-rapid eye movement) sleep. NREM is vastly different from REM in many aspects, in fact brainwaves during this state are much more characteristic than the respective REM ones (which are, unsurprisingly, similar to our waking state ones). Our sleep can thus be divided into two distinct states which leads to the conclusion that we go through three unique cycles, not just two: waking state, NREM and REM. Each cycle of sleep roughly comprises 90 minutes, going through the 4 stages of NREM sleep and finishing with REM. A typical night's sleep will consist of 5-6 cycles...

...I can't stop! Here I am typing scientific stuff about sleep from the top of my head. I could go on. But "Counting Sheep" is not just excellent explaining how sleep works. It goes through all kinds of culture that has been created around sleep, beds, caffeine, dreams, lucidity, sleep disorders, it tells tales of horrible

sleep-deprivation and resulting torture, it outlines how sleep works in animals (every single living being, even bacteria, display some kind of low-activity cycle — dolphins sleep one brain hemisphere at a time!) and perhaps most important of all, it definitely proves that sleep is not only important, it is also a luxury and a pleasure unsung for – nevermind the ridiculous numbers of relevant William Shakespeare quotes.

“Counting Sheep” makes you want to rush to your bed, hug your pillow, rub your feet under the quilt, hang a hammock from the trees outside your door or in case you have no trees plant a couple for this very purpose. It makes you cherish your only pure and unfiltered existence and not feel guilty about that couple of extra hours under the blanket. This book proves that the world would be a much, much better place if only politicians, drivers and nuclear reactor operators took their 40 winks more seriously. If you, like all too many of us these days, think that sleep is nothing but wasted time, you ought to make yourself a favour and read this!

Annabel says

Very interesting, very entertaining....
makes you want to get some shut eye pronto
so you can dream.....recuperate.....integrate knowledge.....
.....get an amazing insight.....keep young and beautiful.....
You get the idea!

Pippin says

This is a great non-fiction book about how sleep works.
It gives an in-depth look at the latest thinking on how sleep works, with lots of interesting stories and facts along the way.
If anything I found it to be a bit dumbed-down in its' writing, but as my sleep-peprived girlfriend refused to read it, saying she's too tired to concentrate on non-fiction I guess it may be about the right level for insomniacs who aren't coping so well.
It's not just a way of learning to slepp better, though. It is a good overview of all aspects of sleep. If you want anything more thorough, you should probably be subscribing to academic publications or the BMJ (British Medical Journal).

Dr X says

There are slow bits, but also highly fascinating bits. You'll learn all there is to know about sleep and also pick up lots of crazy sleep-adjacent facts along the way.

Amy Mikaelson says

When I first started reading this book, I was in the middle of a semester of college and then I ended up

dropping all my classes and had to take it back to the library before I was even half-way through it. I guess that shows you how long it truly takes me to finish a book, especially one of this size. Needless to say, I had to wait until I could actually purchase it to finish it but I did. Over all, it was a pretty decent read, more interesting and informative than I anticipated it would be. Everything you could ever want to know about sleep and even some things you don't. It covers the sleep of more than just humans, but almost every species of animal and even some plants and insects. Yes, those too.

My favorite chapter/part was the one about dreams and dreaming in general. I didn't realize that I was already having lucid dreams of my own until I read more about them. Mmm and I can honestly say that they have been some of the best moments of my life. They are, as the books says, erotic most of the time and OHHHH YEEEEAH, I never want them to end but yep, somehow its always at the best part. Damn! But damn, I wish I had more control over them and could prolong them. Just as the book states, when I try to make them go one way, sometimes they end up going in another direction entirely and I'm like: "NOOOOOO!" But I do always look forward to dreaming. It's the best part of my day whether I'm actually sleeping or just having a siesta (aka - an afternoon nap).

I had to roll my eyes at the part about sleep apnea, even though I knew I was going to get to it eventually. I suffer from that bullshit currently, but I also have a death wish so I rarely use my CPAP machine anyway. It was a pain in the ass when I had to go in there for that sleep study. Honestly, my machine, even when I do use it, has no effect on me whatsoever. It used to. At least the one at the sleep clinic made me feel better but mine does nothing for me. I still feel sleepy during the day, can't function and forget that bullshit about sleeping taking away depression or lack thereof. No amount of sleep will ever take away mine. Not even meds.

I loved reading about the different beds there are though and where certain expressions came from like "sleep tight." And I was both intrigued and surprised to hear about all the artists in this world who have had ideas for music, stories or inventions themselves come to them in their dreams. Just wow. Paul McCartney's songs, Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," Charlie Chaplin's music scoring, even Jekyll & Hyde! Ahhh! :D I love it!

This book was long but it was worth the read for anyone intrigued or interested in the process of sleep. I'm just a little disappointed that the author didn't touch upon those people who are more susceptible to getting nightmares if they are sleeping in a cold room or in a haunted location. I somehow always manage to get nightmares when the room I'm in is too cold. I can't be the only one, can I? Also, just a little tip...if you sleep with a Ouija board beneath your bed, you will have nightmares every single night. I did. Once I removed it, the nightmares miraculously stopped.

But seriously, read this book sleep-enthusiasts!

Doctor_dana says

Very thorough in that it touches on every topic dealing with sleep. The coverage is odd, however; it is sometimes more like an overview of sleep in literature with some brief mentions of scientific experiments. I could have done without so many quotes from fiction, and would have appreciated more detail on the science. He summarizes the outcomes without usually mentioning the experimental methods or sample sizes. It was an easy read, though I kept finding my eyelids drooping. I don't think the author was boring, but the topic gets you thinking that you might just be a little sleepy after all. I have been more aware of my sleep lately, and have paid attention to the dreams I awake from in the mornings with renewed interest. Not a bad book overall.

Mukesh says

This book is great for knowing the sleep wholly. I am now familiar with the sleep than ever. I have got to know that sleep is as important as an activity as our other waking life activities. It deserves the love and respect as other activities do.

It has a lot of facts and many experimental results that I didn't know earlier. It has raised my sleep quotient, if that thing exists, well above the average (of that I am sure).

Happy Sleeping!

Ci says

This book is a compilation of various topics about sleep: why, how, what does science say, what people in the literature realm have written about the many aspects of sleep. This book aimed at being comprehensive, and it does indeed serve as a good reference to topics of interest. There are many useful and colorful quotations from Shakespeare to modern notables.

What it fails is to provide engaging narratives on any topics. If its own aim is to serve as a guide for further study, then it has done its job nobly.

Marc says

Nice, but too many anecdotes and too few statistics, tables and graphs (none of the last two to be exact). Perhaps the anecdotes are very typical, perhaps they're freaks of nature. In the history of beds it is hardly interesting what kings and archbishops slept in, because, by far, most people weren't one.

Redfox5 says

I thought this book was going to be quiet dull but I was so wrong. I found it really intresting. I now have a much better understanding of sleep and dreams. I nearly always remember my dreams, mainly becuae I get up earlyer than I need to, have a bath and then sleep for another hour before going to work. And according to this book your more likely to have REM sleep if you nap in the early morning :) My dreams are always about work and people I work with which makes me belive that dreams don't mean anything and are just things you have seen or done during the day. I also have quiet a few Lucid dreams, usally just in the stages of falling asleep before my morning nap. I have also had sleep paralysis in the past and am glad this book explains them in a scienctific way becuae I had been told before that this is actually you being raped by a sexual ghost and even tho I don't belive in ghosts I find sleep paralysis so scary when they happen that I'm glad there is a different explanation! This book makes me worry slightly about the sleeping habits of my parents and I'm going to be talking to them about how they can sleep better when they come back from there holiday! I think this is a hugely enjoyable book and since most people tend to wonder about there sleeping patterns or dreams at some point I would recommend it to everyone.

Erica says

Sleep: a state so familiar yet so strange. It is the single most common form of human behaviour and you will spend a third of your life doing it - 25 years or more, all being well.

3 1/2 stars. This was a really interesting book with *lots* of facts about all sorts of things related to sleep. It was very well written and I learned a lot reading this. From things like lucid dreaming to how beds have evolved through time. From, for example, narcolepsy to sleep apnea. From sleep through life to the dangers of sleep deprivation. And so on.

We are told that lying around and sleeping too much will only make us sleepier. But in truth we feel sleepy at weekends and on holidays not because we are sleeping too much, but because we have slept too little the rest of the time.

I found it interesting to consider how our sleep patterns have changed through the course of time. From how we before were more or less following the sun to how we nowadays seem to, in industrialized countries anyway, admire the notion to being able to get by on as little sleep as possible. In reality, though, sleep deprivation can be as the same level as being drunk when it comes to matters such as judgment etc. This is a scary thought. Just think about how often we've been on a bus driven by someone sleep deprived. Or perhaps been in need of emergency care by a doctor on call who've had little to no sleep during the night.

... so-called microsleeps, lasting anything up to a minute, often go unnoticed.

So how about this one, then? You could just have been sleeping for up to a minute, if you're tired to begin with, without even noticing. And, if you were wondering, this can happen while driving a car.

So all in all, like I've said already, this was an interesting book. It did make me want to go to sleep from time to time, though. But it wasn't out of boredom, so it's all good.

Nazim Suzaly says

I always had my doubts about sleep on whether is it a good thing or a bad thing and how important it is to our body and just what sleep itself has to offer (okay and the fact that the book was selling at RM8 haha). Well this book by Paul covers every single topic related to sleep on how important it is, the dangers of lack of sleep, REM, nightmares, illness, sleepwalking, snoring, yawning, wet dreams, and the list goes on and on. Whatever that can be related with sleep it is in this book.

Reading this book did make me sleepy for some reason perhaps due to the author elaborating some stuffs to repetitive and detailed (or perhaps because the topic being sleep therefore had its effects). The book is written in simple and understandable english with the author explaining any scientific terms.

But that being said this book did deliver its purpose and I understand and appreciate sleep more than ever. Don't think I will ever need to pick up another book about sleep anymore haha.

Anna says

A good introductory book on the fascinating topic of sleep and dreams – I definitely learned a lot, and reading this book has whetted my appetite to learn even more. I liked the literary references throughout (I'm always for more integration between the sciences and arts) but they became a bit too pervasive and took over somewhat – e.g. I would have preferred a simple clear-cut explanation of sleep paralysis rather than a quote from *Moby Dick*. Lots of interesting little historical anecdotes scattered throughout kept things interesting and amusing, although at times the author's own attempts at humour were a bit too try-hard and rather groan-worthy. Overall though, a very readable and interesting introduction into the many aspects of sleep.
