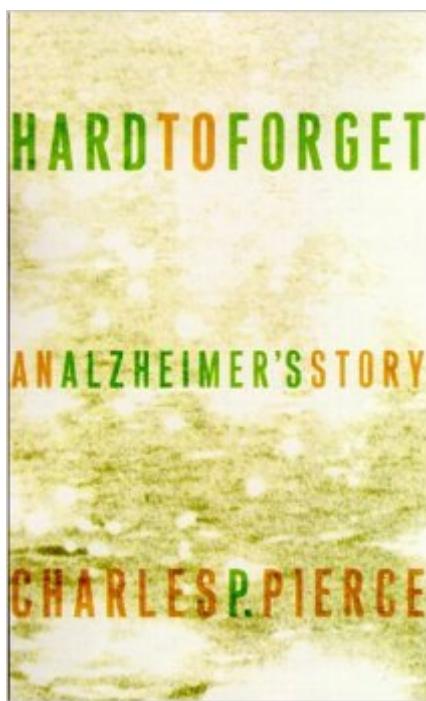


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# Hard To Forget: An Alzheimer's Story



## **Synopsis**

In this remarkable book, Charles P. Pierce intertwines two dramatic stories-the scientific race to discover the causes of Alzheimer's and the moving experiences of the Pierce family as they struggle with the disease. More than four million Americans develop Alzheimer's every year, just as Charles Pierce's father did-horribly and genetically-and in *Hard to Forget*, Pierce takes us deep into the country of this disease, to explore how it affects both the body and a family. When his father is diagnosed with Alzheimer's, the author goes on a quest to discover everything he can about the disease. He discusses here Dr. Alois Alzheimer's work early in the twentieth century, then shows how Watson and Crick's announcement of the double-helix structure of DNA opened up the field of Alzheimer's research and led to discoveries by the "genome cowboys"-Dr. Allen Roses, Dr. Peter Hyslop, and others-of the genetic components of the disease. At the heart of this book, too, is the powerful, emotional story of how the Pierce family coped with Alzheimer's and with the threat that the author-and his children-might also inherit it.

Elegant and richly informative, *Hard to Forget* is a unique and provocative book.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 256 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (11 customer reviews)

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## **Customer Reviews**

Who should buy this book:-- Those who have a family member with Alzheimer's Disease. -- Friends of those families. -- Health-care providers. -- Fans of the nationally-known sportswriter Charles Pierce, because the prose in his first book (his work has been included in many sportswriting anthologies) is just as wonderful as it is on the sports pages. *Hard To Forget* is the story of a young family -- Charles Pierce, his wife Margaret Doris, their new baby Brendan, and Margaret's son Abraham -- how they came to grips with the family denial of Pierce's father's Alzheimer's Disease.

In 1985, Pierce's father John went to place flowers on the family graves in Worcester, Massachusetts, and vanished. He was found three days later in Vermont. When Charles and Margaret went to fetch him, John didn't recognize his son: "I think I'm going to give him that car," he told Margaret. Charles Pierce's mother denied that anything was particularly the matter with her husband. Margaret, his wife, assumed the role of caretaker for her in-laws, trying to deal with the day-to-day issues and to convince her mother-in-law of the reality of the situation. Abraham, her son, found something new to dread in childhood: Sunday visits to Grandma and Grampa Pierce, and the fight in the car on the way home. Charles noticed not only his father's symptoms, but his uncles' and aunt's, and began researching the disease and its tendency to run in families. Would he get Alzheimer's? Would his new baby boy? Should he be tested? What did it mean when he couldn't find his parked car? Pierce weaves together his family's story with a readable history of Alzheimer's Disease and the current, and sometimes conflicting, research. He reports on the studies done on the Amish and on a group of nuns.

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