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Why People Believe Weird Things Why People Believe Weird Things Why People
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How to Think about Weird Things The Believing Brain How We Believe Why People
Believe Weird Things Weird Earth Why Darwin Matters The Borderlands of Science

The WEIRDest People in the World Skeptic How We Believe Denying History Giving the Devil His Due The Moral Arc How to Think about Weird Things The Mind of the Market The Blank Slate Factfulness The Science of Good and Evil White Fragility Heavens on Earth The Buntline Special The Skeptics' Guide to the Universe The Demon-Haunted World Why do people believe weird things? God Is Not Great Weird Stuff The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time How to Think about Weird Things Science Friction Hollow Kingdom Beyond Weird How We Believe, 2nd Edition Wings of Illusion Science and Pseudoscience

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"In his most ambitious work yet, Shermer sets out to discover what drives humans' belief in life after death, focusing on recent scientific attempts to achieve immortality by radical life extentionists, extropians, transhumanists, cryonicists, and mind-uploaders, along with utopians who have attempted to create heaven on earth. For millennia, religions have concocted numerous manifestations of heaven and the afterlife, the place where souls go after the death of the physical body. Religious leaders have toiled to make sense of this place that a surprising 74% of Americans believe exists, but from which no one has ever returned to report what it is really like. Heavens on Earth concludes with an uplifting paean to purpose and progress and what we can do in the here-and-now, whether or not there is a hereafter" -- "Anyone who is not shocked by quantum theory has not understood it." Since Niels Bohr said this many years ago, quantum mechanics has only been getting more shocking. We now realize that it's not really telling us that "weird" things happen out of sight, on the tiniest level, in the atomic world: rather, everything is quantum. But if quantum mechanics is

correct, what seems obvious and right in our everyday world is built on foundations that don't seem obvious or right at all—or even possible. An exhilarating tour of the contemporary quantum landscape, *Beyond Weird* is a book about what quantum physics really means—and what it doesn't. Science writer Philip Ball offers an up-to-date, accessible account of the quest to come to grips with the most fundamental theory of physical reality, and to explain how its counterintuitive principles underpin the world we experience. Over the past decade it has become clear that quantum physics is less a theory about particles and waves, uncertainty and fuzziness, than a theory about information and knowledge—about what can be known, and how we can know it. Discoveries and experiments over the past few decades have called into question the meanings and limits of space and time, cause and effect, and, ultimately, of knowledge itself. The quantum world Ball shows us isn't a different world. It is our world, and if anything deserves to be called “weird,” it's us. Explores how free speech and open inquiry are integral to science, politics, and society for the survival and progress of our species. Teaches the basic principles of good reasoning through an examination of widely held beliefs about the paranormal, the supernatural, and the mysterious. From bestselling author Michael Shermer, an investigation of the evolution of morality that is "a paragon of popularized science and philosophy" *The Sun* (Baltimore) A century and

a half after Darwin first proposed an "evolutionary ethics," science has begun to tackle the roots of morality. Just as evolutionary biologists study why we are hungry (to motivate us to eat) or why sex is enjoyable (to motivate us to procreate), they are now searching for the very nature of humanity. In *The Science of Good and Evil*, science historian Michael Shermer explores how humans evolved from social primates to moral primates; how and why morality motivates the human animal; and how the foundation of moral principles can be built upon empirical evidence. Along the way he explains the implications of scientific findings for fate and free will, the existence of pure good and pure evil, and the development of early moral sentiments among the first humans. As he closes the divide between science and morality, Shermer draws on stories from the Yanamamö, infamously known as the "fierce people" of the tropical rain forest, to the Stanford studies on jailers' behavior in prisons. *The Science of Good and Evil* is ultimately a profound look at the moral animal, belief, and the scientific pursuit of truth. A brilliant inquiry into the origins of human nature from the author of *Rationality*, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, and *Enlightenment Now*. "Sweeping, erudite, sharply argued, and fun to read..also highly persuasive." --Time Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize Updated with a new afterword One of the world's leading experts on language and the mind explores the idea of human nature and its moral, emotional, and

political colorings. With characteristic wit, lucidity, and insight, Pinker argues that the dogma that the mind has no innate traits—a doctrine held by many intellectuals during the past century—denies our common humanity and our individual preferences, replaces objective analyses of social problems with feel-good slogans, and distorts our understanding of politics, violence, parenting, and the arts. Injecting calm and rationality into debates that are notorious for ax-grinding and mud-slinging, Pinker shows the importance of an honest acknowledgment of human nature based on science and common sense. A finalist for the 2020 Thurber Prize for American Humor! "The Secret Life of Pets meets The Walking Dead" in this big-hearted, boundlessly beautiful romp through the Apocalypse, where a foul-mouthed crow is humanity's only chance to survive Seattle's zombie problem (Karen Joy Fowler, PEN/Faulkner Award-winning author). S.T., a domesticated crow, is a bird of simple pleasures: hanging out with his owner Big Jim, trading insults with Seattle's wild crows (i.e. "those idiots"), and enjoying the finest food humankind has to offer: Cheetos®. But when Big Jim's eyeball falls out of his head, S.T. starts to think something's not quite right. His tried-and-true remedies—from beak-delivered beer to the slobbering affection of Big Jim's loyal but dim-witted dog, Dennis—fail to cure Big Jim's debilitating malady. S.T. is left with no choice but to abandon his old life and venture out into a wild and

frightening new world with his trusty steed Dennis, where he suddenly discovers that the neighbors are devouring one other. Local wildlife is abuzz with rumors of Seattle's dangerous new predators. Humanity's extinction has seemingly arrived, and the only one determined to save it is a cowardly crow whose only knowledge of the world comes from TV. What could possibly go wrong? Includes a Reading Group Guide. A new edition covering the latest scientific research on how the brain makes us believers or skeptics Recent polls report that 96 percent of Americans believe in God, and 73 percent believe that angels regularly visit Earth. Why is this? Why, despite the rise of science, technology, and secular education, are people turning to religion in greater numbers than ever before? Why do people believe in God at all? These provocative questions lie at the heart of *How We Believe*, an illuminating study of God, faith, and religion. Bestselling author Michael Shermer offers fresh and often startling insights into age-old questions, including how and why humans put their faith in a higher power, even in the face of scientific skepticism. Shermer has updated the book to explore the latest research and theories of psychiatrists, neuroscientists, epidemiologists, and philosophers, as well as the role of faith in our increasingly diverse modern world. Whether believers or nonbelievers, we are all driven by the need to understand the universe and our place in it. *How We Believe* is a brilliant scientific

tour of this ancient and mysterious desire. With this no-holds-barred assault on popular myths and prejudices, a science historian debunks psychobabble and extraordinary, nonsensical claims. 25 illustrations. A survey of a range of irrationalisms, with explanations of their empirical and logical flaws, this book describes the differences between science and pseudo-science, and goes on to describe and critique popular contemporary irrationalisms. Why do smart people believe weird things? Why do so many people believe in mind reading, past-life regression therapy, extra-terrestrial abduction and ghosts? What is behind the rise of 'scientific creationism' and Holocaust denial? In an age of supposed scientific enlightenment why do we appear more impressionable than ever? Scientific historian, and director of the Skeptics Society, Michael Shermer debunks these extraordinary claims in a no-holds-barred assault on the popular superstitions and confused prejudices of our time. Exploring the very human reasons behind otherworldly phenomena, conspiracy theories and cults Shermer explains why are they are so appealing to so many. "Skepticism is the agent of reason against organized irrationalism -and is therefore one of the keys to human social and civic decency." Stephen Jay Gould, from his foreword Shermer reveals the darker side of wishful thinking, through the recovered memory movement, satanic rituals and other modern witch hunts, and ideologies of racial superiority. Confronting those who take

advantage of the gullibility of other people to advance their own, self-serving agendas

Why People Believe Weird Things is compelling and often disturbing. It is a perceptive portrait of the human capacity for self-delusion and a celebration of the scientific spirit.

A New York Times Notable Book of 2020
A Bloomberg Best Non-Fiction Book of 2020
A Behavioral Scientist Notable Book of 2020
A Human Behavior & Evolution Society Must-Read Popular Evolution Book of 2020

A bold, epic account of how the co-evolution of psychology and culture created the peculiar Western mind that has profoundly shaped the modern world. Perhaps you are WEIRD: raised in a society that is Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic. If so, you're rather psychologically peculiar. Unlike much of the world today, and most people who have ever lived, WEIRD people are highly individualistic, self-obsessed, control-oriented, nonconformist, and analytical. They focus on themselves—their attributes, accomplishments, and aspirations—over their relationships and social roles. How did WEIRD populations become so psychologically distinct? What role did these psychological differences play in the industrial revolution and the global expansion of Europe during the last few centuries? In *The WEIRDest People in the World*, Joseph Henrich draws on cutting-edge research in anthropology, psychology, economics, and evolutionary biology to explore these questions and more. He illuminates the origins

and evolution of family structures, marriage, and religion, and the profound impact these cultural transformations had on human psychology. Mapping these shifts through ancient history and late antiquity, Henrich reveals that the most fundamental institutions of kinship and marriage changed dramatically under pressure from the Roman Catholic Church. It was these changes that gave rise to the WEIRD psychology that would coevolve with impersonal markets, occupational specialization, and free competition—laying the foundation for the modern world. Provocative and engaging in both its broad scope and its surprising details, *The WEIRDest People in the World* explores how culture, institutions, and psychology shape one another, and explains what this means for both our most personal sense of who we are as individuals and also the large-scale social, political, and economic forces that drive human history. Includes black-and-white illustrations. Brian Hubble isn't much of a writer—he's more of a soccer player. (And sometimes he's not much of a soccer player either!) But one day he borrows a pink Easyflow pen from Nathan Lumsdyke, during his favorite author's school visit, and suddenly, he can't stop writing. Unfortunately for Brian, the pen only writes flowery, embarrassing love stories, even in his science test. Brian can't wait to give the weird pen back...until he realizes Cassandra Wyman is a lot more interested in writing than she is in soccer. Be sure to look for Richard Tulloch's other book, *Freaky*

Stuff! The New York Times best-selling book exploring the counterproductive reactions white people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and how these reactions maintain racial inequality. In this “vital, necessary, and beautiful book” (Michael Eric Dyson), antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo deftly illuminates the phenomenon of white fragility and “allows us to understand racism as a practice not restricted to ‘bad people’ (Claudia Rankine). Referring to the defensive moves that white people make when challenged racially, white fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentation and silence. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and prevent any meaningful cross-racial dialogue. In this in-depth exploration, DiAngelo examines how white fragility develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what we can do to engage more constructively. Bestselling author and psychologist Shermer explains how evolution has shaped the modern economy--and why people are so irrational about money. Drawing on the new field of neuroeconomics, Shermer investigates what brain scans reveal about bargaining, snap purchases, and establishing trust in business. Who believes in conspiracy theories, and why are some people more susceptible to them than others? What are the consequences of such beliefs? Has a conspiracy theory ever turned out to be true? The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories

debunks the myth that conspiracy theories are a modern phenomenon, exploring their broad social contexts, from politics to the workplace. The book explains why some people are more susceptible to these beliefs than others and how they are produced by recognizable and predictable psychological processes. Featuring examples such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks and climate change, *The Psychology of Conspiracy Theories* shows us that while such beliefs are not always irrational and are not a pathological trait, they can be harmful to individuals and society. Recent polls show that 96% of Americans believe in God. Why are people turning to religion in greater numbers than ever before? In *How We Believe*, Michael Shermer presents the results of an exhaustive empirical study in which he asked 10,000 Americans how and why they believe and about details of their faith. The result offers fresh and startling insights into age-old questions. Collected essays from bestselling author Michael Shermer's celebrated columns in *Scientific American* For fifteen years, bestselling author Michael Shermer has written a column in *Scientific American* magazine that synthesizes scientific concepts and theory for a general audience. His trademark combination of deep scientific understanding and entertaining writing style has thrilled his huge and devoted audience for years. Now, in *Skeptic*, seventy-five of these columns are available together for the first time; a welcome addition for his fans and a stimulating

introduction for new readers. Denying History takes a bold and in-depth look at those who say the Holocaust never happened and explores the motivations behind such claims. While most commentators have dismissed the Holocaust deniers as antisemitic neo-Nazi thugs who do not deserve a response, historians Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman have immersed themselves in the minds and culture of these Holocaust "revisionists." In the process, they show how we can be certain that the Holocaust happened and, for that matter, how we can confirm any historical event. This edition is expanded with a new chapter and epilogue examining current, shockingly mainstream revisionism. An all-encompassing guide to skeptical thinking from podcast host and academic neurologist at Yale University School of Medicine Steven Novella and his SGU co-hosts, which Richard Wiseman calls "the perfect primer for anyone who wants to separate fact from fiction." It is intimidating to realize that we live in a world overflowing with misinformation, bias, myths, deception, and flawed knowledge. There really are no ultimate authority figures-no one has the secret, and there is no place to look up the definitive answers to our questions (not even Google). Luckily, The Skeptic's Guide to the Universe is your map through this maze of modern life. Here Dr. Steven Novella-along with Bob Novella, Cara Santa Maria, Jay Novella, and Evan Bernstein-will explain the tenets of skeptical thinking and debunk some of the

biggest scientific myths, fallacies, and conspiracy theories—from anti-vaccines to homeopathy, UFO sightings to N-rays. You'll learn the difference between science and pseudoscience, essential critical thinking skills, ways to discuss conspiracy theories with that crazy co-worker of yours, and how to combat sloppy reasoning, bad arguments, and superstitious thinking. So are you ready to join them on an epic scientific quest, one that has taken us from huddling in dark caves to setting foot on the moon? (Yes, we really did that.) DON'T PANIC! With *The Skeptic's Guide to the Universe*, we can do this together. "Thorough, informative, and enlightening, *The Skeptic's Guide to the Universe* inoculates you against the frailties and shortcomings of human cognition. If this book does not become required reading for us all, we may well see modern civilization unravel before our eyes." -- Neil deGrasse Tyson "In this age of real and fake information, your ability to reason, to think in scientifically skeptical fashion, is the most important skill you can have. Read *The Skeptic's Guide to the Universe*; get better at reasoning. And if this claim about the importance of reason is wrong, *The Skeptic's Guide* will help you figure that out, too." -- Bill Nye

The Believing Brain is bestselling author Michael Shermer's comprehensive and provocative theory on how beliefs are born, formed, reinforced, challenged, changed, and extinguished. In this work synthesizing thirty years of research, psychologist, historian of science, and the

world's best-known skeptic Michael Shermer upends the traditional thinking about how humans form beliefs about the world. Simply put, beliefs come first and explanations for beliefs follow. The brain, Shermer argues, is a belief engine. From sensory data flowing in through the senses, the brain naturally begins to look for and find patterns, and then infuses those patterns with meaning. Our brains connect the dots of our world into meaningful patterns that explain why things happen, and these patterns become beliefs. Once beliefs are formed the brain begins to look for and find confirmatory evidence in support of those beliefs, which accelerates the process of reinforcing them, and round and round the process goes in a positive-feedback loop of belief confirmation. Shermer outlines the numerous cognitive tools our brains engage to reinforce our beliefs as truths. Interlaced with his theory of belief, Shermer provides countless real-world examples of how this process operates, from politics, economics, and religion to conspiracy theories, the supernatural, and the paranormal. Ultimately, he demonstrates why science is the best tool ever devised to determine whether or not a belief matches reality. A prescient warning of a future we now inhabit, where fake news stories and Internet conspiracy theories play to a disaffected American populace “A glorious book . . . A spirited defense of science . . . From the first page to the last, this book is a manifesto for clear thought.”—Los Angeles Times How can we make

intelligent decisions about our increasingly technology-driven lives if we don't understand the difference between the myths of pseudoscience and the testable hypotheses of science? Pulitzer Prize-winning author and distinguished astronomer Carl Sagan argues that scientific thinking is critical not only to the pursuit of truth but to the very well-being of our democratic institutions. Casting a wide net through history and culture, Sagan examines and authoritatively debunks such celebrated fallacies of the past as witchcraft, faith healing, demons, and UFOs. And yet, disturbingly, in today's so-called information age, pseudoscience is burgeoning with stories of alien abduction, channeling past lives, and communal hallucinations commanding growing attention and respect. As Sagan demonstrates with lucid eloquence, the siren song of unreason is not just a cultural wrong turn but a dangerous plunge into darkness that threatens our most basic freedoms. Praise for *The Demon-Haunted World* "Powerful . . . A stirring defense of informed rationality. . . Rich in surprising information and beautiful writing."—The Washington Post Book World "Compelling."—USA Today "A clear vision of what good science means and why it makes a difference. . . . A testimonial to the power of science and a warning of the dangers of unrestrained credulity."—The Sciences "Passionate."—San Francisco Examiner-Chronicle This brief, inexpensive text helps the reader to think critically,

using examples from the weird claims and beliefs that abound in our culture to demonstrate the sound evaluation of any claim. The authors focus on types of logical arguments and proofs, making *How to Think about Weird Things* a versatile supplement for logic, critical thinking, philosophy of science, or any other science appreciation courses. Recent polls show that 96% of Americans believe in God. Why are people turning to religion in greater numbers than ever before? In *How We Believe*, Michael Shermer presents the results of an exhaustive empirical study in which he asked 10,000 Americans how and why they believe and about details of their faith. The result offers fresh and startling insights into age-old questions. Presents a collection of essays on various topics in science and personalities in science, including Carl Sagan, Sigmund Freud, and Alfred Russel Wallace. **INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER** “One of the most important books I’ve ever read—an indispensable guide to thinking clearly about the world.” – Bill Gates “Hans Rosling tells the story of ‘the secret silent miracle of human progress’ as only he can. But *Factfulness* does much more than that. It also explains why progress is so often secret and silent and teaches readers how to see it clearly.” —Melinda Gates “*Factfulness* by Hans Rosling, an outstanding international public health expert, is a hopeful book about the potential for human progress when we work off facts rather than our inherent biases.” - Former U.S.

President Barack Obama Factfulness: The stress-reducing habit of only carrying opinions for which you have strong supporting facts. When asked simple questions about global trends—what percentage of the world’s population live in poverty; why the world’s population is increasing; how many girls finish school—we systematically get the answers wrong. So wrong that a chimpanzee choosing answers at random will consistently outguess teachers, journalists, Nobel laureates, and investment bankers. In Factfulness, Professor of International Health and global TED phenomenon Hans Rosling, together with his two long-time collaborators, Anna and Ola, offers a radical new explanation of why this happens. They reveal the ten instincts that distort our perspective—from our tendency to divide the world into two camps (usually some version of us and them) to the way we consume media (where fear rules) to how we perceive progress (believing that most things are getting worse). Our problem is that we don’t know what we don’t know, and even our guesses are informed by unconscious and predictable biases. It turns out that the world, for all its imperfections, is in a much better state than we might think. That doesn’t mean there aren’t real concerns. But when we worry about everything all the time instead of embracing a worldview based on facts, we can lose our ability to focus on the things that threaten us most. Inspiring and revelatory, filled with lively anecdotes and moving stories,

Factfulness is an urgent and essential book that will change the way you see the world and empower you to respond to the crises and opportunities of the future. --- “This book is my last battle in my life-long mission to fight devastating ignorance...Previously I armed myself with huge data sets, eye-opening software, an energetic learning style and a Swedish bayonet for sword-swallowing. It wasn't enough. But I hope this book will be.” Hans Rosling, February 2017. "'Wings of Illusions' offers a unique and disquieting perspective on paranormal belief, including religious belief. Schumaker points out that reality-defying beliefs represent one of the few truly universal elements of human culture. ... The object of this study is to trace the psychological origins of the paranormal and to consider the implications of the prevalence of paranormal belief for the future development of humanity." -- Back cover. Revised and Expanded Edition. In this age of supposed scientific enlightenment, many people still believe in mind reading, past-life regression theory, New Age hokum, and alien abduction. A no-holds-barred assault on popular superstitions and prejudices, with more than 80,000 copies in print, *Why People Believe Weird Things* debunks these nonsensical claims and explores the very human reasons people find otherworldly phenomena, conspiracy theories, and cults so appealing. In an entirely new chapter, "Why Smart People Believe in Weird Things," Michael Shermer takes on science

luminaries like physicist Frank Tippler and others, who hide their spiritual beliefs behind the trappings of science. Shermer, science historian and true crusader, also reveals the more dangerous side of such illogical thinking, including Holocaust denial, the recovered-memory movement, the satanic ritual abuse scare, and other modern crazes. *Why People Believe Strange Things* is an eye-opening resource for the most gullible among us and those who want to protect them. A creationist-turned-scientist demonstrates the facts of evolution and exposes Intelligent Design's real agenda. Science is on the defensive. Half of Americans reject the theory of evolution and "Intelligent Design" campaigns are gaining ground. Classroom by classroom, creationism is overthrowing biology. In *Why Darwin Matters*, bestselling author Michael Shermer explains how the newest brand of creationism appeals to our predisposition to look for a designer behind life's complexity. Shermer decodes the scientific evidence to show that evolution is not "just a theory" and illustrates how it achieves the design of life through the bottom-up process of natural selection. Shermer, once an evangelical Christian and a creationist, argues that Intelligent Design proponents are invoking a combination of bad science, political antipathy, and flawed theology. He refutes their pseudoscientific arguments and then demonstrates why conservatives and people of faith can and should embrace evolution. He then appraises

the evolutionary questions that truly need to be settled, building a powerful argument for science itself. Cutting the politics away from the facts, *Why Darwin Matters* is an incisive examination of what is at stake in the debate over evolution. Christopher Hitchens, described in the *London Observer* as “one of the most prolific, as well as brilliant, journalists of our time” takes on his biggest subject yet—the increasingly dangerous role of religion in the world. In the tradition of Bertrand Russell’s *Why I Am Not a Christian* and Sam Harris’s recent bestseller, *The End Of Faith*, Christopher Hitchens makes the ultimate case against religion. With a close and erudite reading of the major religious texts, he documents the ways in which religion is a man-made wish, a cause of dangerous sexual repression, and a distortion of our origins in the cosmos. With eloquent clarity, Hitchens frames the argument for a more secular life based on science and reason, in which hell is replaced by the Hubble Telescope’s awesome view of the universe, and Moses and the burning bush give way to the beauty and symmetry of the double helix. “A breath of intellectual fresh air . . . [an] amusing look at how to dispel endemic pseudoscience and conspiracy theories through rational thinking.” —*Publishers Weekly* Aliens. Ley lines. Water dowsing. Conspiracies and myths captivate imaginations and promise mystery and magic. Whether it’s arguing about the moon landing hoax or a Frisbee-like Earth drifting through space, when held up to

science and critical thinking, these ideas fall flat. In *Weird Earth: Debunking Strange Ideas About Our Planet*, Donald R. Prothero demystifies these conspiracies and offers answers to some of humanity's most outlandish questions. Applying his extensive scientific knowledge, Prothero corrects misinformation that con artists and quacks use to hoodwink others about geology—hollow earth, expanding earth, and bizarre earthquakes—and mystical and paranormal happenings—healing crystals, alien landings, and the gates of hell. By deconstructing wild claims such as prophecies of imminent natural disasters, Prothero provides a way for everyone to recognize dubious assertions. Prothero answers these claims with facts, offering historical and scientific context in a light-hearted manner that is accessible to everyone, no matter their background. With a careful layering of evidence in geology, archaeology, and biblical and historical records, Prothero's *Weird Earth* examines each conspiracy and myth and leaves no question unanswered. *Weird Earth* is about the facts and the people who don't believe them. Don Prothero describes the process of science—and the process of not accepting it. If you're wondering if humans walked on the Moon, if you've wondered where the lost City of Atlantis went, or if you're wondering what your cat will do before an earthquake, check out *Weird Earth*.” —Bill Nye A bestselling modern classic—both poignant and funny—narrated by a fifteen year old autistic savant

obsessed with Sherlock Holmes, this dazzling novel weaves together an old-fashioned mystery, a contemporary coming-of-age story, and a fascinating excursion into a mind incapable of processing emotions. Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, Christopher is autistic. Everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning for him. At fifteen, Christopher's carefully constructed world falls apart when he finds his neighbour's dog Wellington impaled on a garden fork, and he is initially blamed for the killing. Christopher decides that he will track down the real killer, and turns to his favourite fictional character, the impeccably logical Sherlock Holmes, for inspiration. But the investigation leads him down some unexpected paths and ultimately brings him face to face with the dissolution of his parents' marriage. As Christopher tries to deal with the crisis within his own family, the narrative draws readers into the workings of Christopher's mind. And herein lies the key to the brilliance of Mark Haddon's choice of narrator: The most wrenching of emotional moments are chronicled by a boy who cannot fathom emotions. The effect is dazzling, making for one of the freshest debut in years: a comedy, a tearjerker, a mystery story, a novel of exceptional literary merit that is great fun to read. Welcome to a West like you've never seen before, where electric lights shine down on the streets

of Tombstone, while horseless stagecoaches carry passengers to and fro, and where death is no obstacle to *The Thing That Was Once Johnny Ringo*. Think you know the story of the O.K. Corral? Think again, as five-time Hugo winner Mike Resnick takes on his first steampunk western tale, and the West will never be the same. Revised and Expanded Edition. In this age of supposed scientific enlightenment, many people still believe in mind reading, past-life regression theory, New Age hokum, and alien abduction. A no-holds-barred assault on popular superstitions and prejudices, with more than 80,000 copies in print, *Why People Believe Weird Things* debunks these nonsensical claims and explores the very human reasons people find otherworldly phenomena, conspiracy theories, and cults so appealing. In an entirely new chapter, "Why Smart People Believe in Weird Things," Michael Shermer takes on science luminaries like physicist Frank Tipler and others, who hide their spiritual beliefs behind the trappings of science. Shermer, science historian and true crusader, also reveals the more dangerous side of such illogical thinking, including Holocaust denial, the recovered-memory movement, the satanic ritual abuse scare, and other modern crazes. *Why People Believe Strange Things* is an eye-opening resource for the most gullible among us and those who want to protect them. Bestselling author Michael Shermer delves into the unknown, from heretical ideas about the boundaries of the

universe to Star Trek's lessons about chance and time. A scientist pretends to be a psychic for a day-and fools everyone. An athlete discovers that good-luck rituals and getting into "the zone" may, or may not, improve his performance. A historian decides to analyze the data to see who was truly responsible for the Bounty mutiny. A son explores the possibilities of alternative and experimental medicine for his cancer-ravaged mother. And a skeptic realizes that it is time to turn the skeptical lens onto science itself. In each of the fourteen essays in *Science Friction*, psychologist and science historian Michael Shermer explores the very personal barriers and biases that plague and propel science, especially when scientists push against the unknown. What do we know and what do we not know? How does science respond to controversy, attack, and uncertainty? When does theory become accepted fact? As always, Shermer delivers a thought-provoking, fascinating, and entertaining view of life in the scientific age. Bestselling author Michael Shermer's exploration of science and morality that demonstrates how the scientific way of thinking has made people, and society as a whole, more moral. From Galileo and Newton to Thomas Hobbes and Martin Luther King, Jr., thinkers throughout history have consciously employed scientific techniques to better understand the non-physical world. The Age of Reason and the Enlightenment led theorists to apply scientific reasoning to the non-scientific disciplines of politics,

economics, and moral philosophy. Instead of relying on the woodcuts of dissected bodies in old medical texts, physicians opened bodies themselves to see what was there; instead of divining truth through the authority of an ancient holy book or philosophical treatise, people began to explore the book of nature for themselves through travel and exploration; instead of the supernatural belief in the divine right of kings, people employed a natural belief in the right of democracy. In *The Moral Arc*, Shermer will explain how abstract reasoning, rationality, empiricism, skepticism--scientific ways of thinking--have profoundly changed the way we perceive morality and, indeed, move us ever closer to a more just world. This book is based on an in-depth filmed conversation between Howard Burton and Michael Gordin, Rosengarten Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at Princeton University. This thought-provoking, extensive conversation examines the strange case of Immanuel Velikovsky, author of the bestselling book "Worlds in Collision" that managed to provocatively combine unbridled scientific speculation with ancient myth, as a way of probing the often-problematic boundary between science and pseudoscience. By all accounts, Velikovsky was a decidedly curious character. The notorious Russian-born doctor-turned psychoanalyst-turned astronomer-historian-autodidact not only had a flair for writing and boatloads of charisma and energy, he also was on record for making a

couple of concrete predictions of his radical new theory of the solar system that turned out, much to the dismay of the authorities of the day, to actually be correct. This carefully-edited book includes an introduction, Harnessing the Fringe, and questions for discussion at the end of each chapter: I. A Counterculture Hero - Introducing Immanuel Velikovsky II. An Ideal Case - The historical allure of Velikovsky III. The Lysenko Lesson - Science meets politics IV. A Freudian Cosmology - Validation by hostility V. Enter Einstein - Velikovsky makes predictions VI. Responses and Reactions - Publicity and hostility VII. Digging In - Unorthodox, up to a point VIII. Science vs. Pseudoscience - In search of a bright line IX. Fringe Benefits - Seeking a balance X. Learning From History - Towards better science? XI. Anthropic Digression - Falsifiability today XII. Better Science? - Educated by history About Ideas Roadshow Conversations Series: This book is part of an expanding series of 100+ Ideas Roadshow conversations, each one presenting a wealth of candid insights from a leading expert in a relaxed and informal setting to give non-specialists a uniquely accessible window into frontline research and scholarship that wouldn't otherwise be encountered through standard lectures and textbooks. For other books in this series visit our website (<https://ideas-on-film.com/ideasroadshow/>). Believing Weird Things is a somewhat playful response to the author happening upon a book by Michael Shermer entitled

Why People Believe Weird Things. It may be read as a set of skeptical exercises following the tradition that runs from Cicero and Sextus Empiricus to Feyerabend and Latour. Some weird beliefs, the author finds, can be defended as rational if one or two crucial assumptions are changed. Conversely, putatively rational beliefs can be made to seem quite bizarre. The reader may enjoy this process as an intellectual parlor game but it becomes an important consideration when epistemic privilege is at stake: the uses to which notions of 'rationality' and 'irrationality' can be put are not always politically or socially innocent. Though begun in a playful mode the author could not ignore the events about him as he worked on this book. Accordingly, the second part of this collection takes on a more serious tone as dogmas that animate both the right and left in contemporary politics and society come under scrutiny. Once, long ago, the author held corrosive skepticism to be the chief ill of contemporary society. Somewhat ruefully, he has concluded that our problem is in fact corrosive dogmatism. In science, religion and politics credulity reigns in forms ranging from un-sophisticated fundamentalism to dense, complex rationalizations of largely a-rational belief systems. In short, the world could use a healthy dose of responsible skepticism in the Antique tradition.

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