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# Why People Believe Weird Things Pseudoscience Supersition And Other Confusions Of Our Time Michael Shermer

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~~Atheist Book Review No.20 Why People Believe Weird Things~~  
Why People Believe Weird Things

□Why People Believe Weird Things□ is divided up into five sections. The first two sections and the fifth section are excellent, dealing with science and skepticism, pseudoscience and superstition, and an analysis of why weird concepts find a place in the human mind □ even in the brains of □smart□ people. Sections three and four, however, which deal respectively with evolution vs ...

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## Things Pseudoscience

Why People Believe Weird Things:  
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Why People Believe Weird Things:

Pseudoscience, Superstition, and  
Other Confusions of Our Time is a  
1997 book by science writer Michael  
Shermer. The foreword was written by  
Stephen Jay Gould. Summary. In the  
first section, Shermer discusses the  
ideas that he has ...

Why People Believe Weird Things -  
Wikipedia

Why do people see the Virgin Mary on  
a cheese sandwich or hear demonic  
lyrics in "Stairway to Heaven"? Using  
video and music, skeptic Michael  
Shermer shows how we convince  
ourselves to believe -- and overlook  
the facts. Menu. Watch. TED Talks.  
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## Michael Shermer

Michael Shermer: Why people believe weird things | TED Talk

Social psychology has clearly shown that we have certain ingrained biases in our thought processes that lead our normal, objective thinking astray. These biases serve not only to lead people to...

Why Do People Believe Strange Things? | Psychology Today

<http://www.ted.com> Why do people see the Virgin Mary on cheese sandwiches or hear demonic lyrics in "Stairway to Heaven"? Using video, images and music, prof...

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Why people believe weird things | Michael Shermer - YouTube  
Psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists have all come forward with theories to explain, as Michael Shermer expressed it as the title of a book, "why people believe weird things." Shermer,...

## Why People Believe Weird Things | Psychology Today

In the end, Shermer surmises that most people believe in weird things because of instant gratification, gullibility, and morality, while smart people believe in weird things due to their ability to rationalize without sufficient evidence. In addition to *Why People Believe Weird Things*, Shermer has written several novels.

## Why People Believe Weird Things

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Summary | SuperSummary

For the most part, what I mean by a "weird thing" is: a claim unaccepted by most people in that particular field of study, a claim that is either logically impossible or highly unlikely, and/or a claim for which the evidence is largely anecdotal and uncorroborated.

Why People Believe Weird Things:

Excerpt » Michael Shermer

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.

Why People Believe Weird Things »  
Michael Shermer



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This is one fallacy among 25 others that Shermer describes that underpin belief in weird things. There are others: the fallacy that the minority view must necessarily be the right one, the fallacy that a coincidence proves a cause, and such like that underpin those who accept weird beliefs.

Why People Believe Weird Things:  
Pseudoscience ...

Michael Shermer's "Why People Believe Weird Things" is a terrific book. Wow. I cannot emphasize enough what an enjoyable read this book is for anybody tired of being surrounded by people who view the world as some sort of unsolvable supernatural puzzle. Because the world isn't! Sure, we can't explain the entire world. If we could, we wouldn't need science or reason or philosophy

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or psychology ... Pseudoscience

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The problem with having a theory is that it may be loaded with cognitive biases. So one of the problems of explaining why people believe weird things is that we have things, on a simple level, and then I'll go to more serious ones. Like, we have a tendency to see faces. This is the face on Mars.

Michael Shermer: Why people believe weird things | TED ...

In his first book, **WHY PEOPLE BELIEVE WEIRD THINGS**, he takes on subjects including Holocaust denial, psychics, creationism, alien abductions, Satanism, Afrocentrism, near-death experiences, recovered

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Things, Ayn Rand, and astrology.

Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience ...

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

Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience ...

Full text of Michael Shermer's talk: *Why People Believe Weird Things* at TED Talks conference. Listen to the MP3 Audio here: Michael Shermer on *Why people believe weird things* at

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TED Talks. TRANSCRIPT: I'm Michael Shermer, director of the Skeptics Society, publisher of Skeptic Magazine. We investigate claims of the paranormal, pseudo-science, fringe groups and cults, and claims of all kinds ...

Why People Believe Weird Things by Michael Shermer (Full ...

Why People Believe Weird Things is an eye-opening resource for the most gullible among us and those who want to protect them.

Why People Believe Weird Things (autographed paperback ...

You are purchasing a Acceptable copy of 'Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudo-Science, Superstition, and Bogus Notions of Our Time' Seller assumes all responsibility for this

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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

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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.

A survey of a range of irrationalisms, with explanations of their empirical and logical flaws, this book describes the

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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

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Things 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 forewordShermer 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.

Revised and Expanded Edition. In this



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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

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things, 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.

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.

From bestselling author Michael

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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

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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 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

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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

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our place in it. How We Believe is a brilliant scientific tour of this ancient and mysterious desire.

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

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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

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Things That Don't Match Reality

Supernatural And Other Confusions Of Our Time

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.

A creationist-turned-scientist demonstrates the facts of evolution



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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

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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.

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

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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

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Things in the scientific age.

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## Confusions Of Our Time

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