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Frauds myths and mysteries pdf download full version

You can download the paper by clicking the button above. However, the eleventh chapter is the only one in which the author's anti-religious invective really surfaces, and then it is still balanced by a reliance on facts, figures, and other scientific evidence. Similarly, most researchers who study plagiarism and falsification would assert that exposing fraud and complicating accepted ideas about plagiarism is a worthy goal. Though the identity of the person(s) responsible for the Piltdown fake remains unknown, it is not so much "whodunnit" (p. 171) In the fifth edition, references to Indiana Jones have been stripped, but the tone remains the same: "The scientists have uncovered concrete proof of a miracle and, at least indirectly, proof of the existence of God. Of true archaeological works, to which some ascribe nonsensical explanations, Feder says, "Let's face it; I'm an archaeology nerd. 26), by addressing the Shroud of Turin, Noah's Ark, and the biblical Flood. The frauds Feder describes in successive chapters grow more complex; as time has passed and science has become more sophisticated, so too have the tools available to potential charlatans. Science makes no claim to have all the answers or even to be right all the time. For example, Feder outlines the history of the Cardiff Giant in chapter three. This desire was further complicated by the institutional difficulties that accompany an accusation of plagiarism: I must figure out where the student plagiarized from, perhaps fill out forms detailing the accusation, meet with the student and perhaps re-grade the assignment, and so on. The Cardiff Giant was exposed because one of the men behind the fraud, George Hull, confessed after rumors and suspicion began to circulate. - Don't be too successful - too many finds draw the wrong kind of attention- Learn from your mistakes - debunking hoaxes tells future hoaxers what not to doPyramids, Atlantis, ancient aliens, crop circles, Turin shrouds, psychic archeology, an ark of Noah, Feder covers a lot of ground (accidental humor.) The past is open to interpretation, unfortunately. Feder says of the Piltdown hoax: "Many accepted the Piltdown evidence because they wished to—it supported a more comfortable view of human evolution." A lot of hoaxes are successful because they have enough believers who want to believe them. Obviously, a 30-ton, 40-foot-tall, 100-foot-long Supersaurus would have been more than a little cramped in its quarters. The author specifically addresses his book to fellow archaeology teachers (such as in the introduction when Feder notes that "all of us who teach archaeology hear [uninformed] comments ... Some of their adherents dabble in archaeology, trying to prove the validity of their religious beliefs or claims through the discovery of archaeological evidence. . 86). Feder argues that we believe what we want to believe, often despite evidence to the contrary. Thanks to more sophisticated technological tools, scientists can now rely on radiocarbon dating, scanning electron microscopes, ion microprobes and the like to discern the validity of archeological finds. 78) as why. Finally, I hope I have shown in this book that the veritable past is every bit as interesting as those pasts constructed by the fantasy weavers of frauds, myths, and mysteries. In every generation, thinkers, writers, scholars, charlatans, and kooks (these are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories) attempt to cast the past in an image either they or the public desire or find comforting. This critical material is provided, of course, in the hopes that students will apply these analysis tools to their archeological studies—and perhaps to Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries itself. Still, Feder is at his strongest when he is explaining his view of scientific rationality; I hate to see him contributing to the perpetual tension between science and religion using sarcasm and dismissal. We deserve a veritable past, a real past constructed from the sturdy fabric of geology, paleontology, archaeology, and history, woven on the loom of science. And, admittedly, Feder's tone is less sarcastic in the fifth edition than in the first; for instance, while he paints creationists as "lame" and "laughable" threats to scientific rationality in his 1991 text, Feder refers to these same creationists as simply "weak and unoriginal" (p. (1991, p. 278) My only issue with Feder's treatment of the tensions between scientific belief and religious faith is his occasional reliance on sarcastic dismissal of religious beliefs. (p. This guide asks students to critically analyze claims by asking themselves where the claims are presented and by whom; how do the authors "know" they are right; whether others have been consulted and whether these others are also convinced; and whether confirming data are presented. Chapter four points out the "inelegant fake" (p. Why did people so readily accept the shoddy fake Piltdown skull at—if you'll pardon the pun—face value? Biblical giants—some, apparently, walking their pet dinosaurs—large-brained, ape-jawed ancestors, lost tribes, lost continents, mysterious races, and ancient astronauts have all been a part of their concocted fantasies. But I believe, and have tried to show in this book, that we deserve better—and we can do better. Maybe Indy's next adventure could involve archaeological proof of the God of the Bible. He ends by again imploring the reader to make informed decisions about history based on critical analysis of available evidence: "Many different possible pasts can be constructed ... However, as an introductory text in a course that addresses scientific rationality, frauds and misinformation, and/or rhetorical awareness of audience, Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries offers some appealing examples that will likely connect well with students. 51). In large part, science is a series of techniques used to maximize the probability that what we think we know really reflects the way things are, were, or will be. Money is the biggest motivation; fame, of course; sometimes nationalism, and racism. Feder. This review addresses the fifth edition (2006) of Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries but occasionally references changes made between the first edition (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1991) and the fifth. 2. Ignaz Semmelweis, a Hungarian physician, was credited as discovering the importance of hygiene in obstetrics after testing numerous hypotheses regarding high mortality rates for women in a Viennese maternity ward. Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology Kenneth L. 86) of the Piltdown man fossil, supposedly a missing link in our evolutionary history that would prove the human brain evolved long before the modernization of the human body. Feder asserts that no one would be fooled by such a "shabby hoax" today. Martin Luther, leader of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, asked, "What harm would it do if a man told a good strong lie for the sake of the good and for the Christian Church. Other textbook-friendly features include a "frequently asked questions" section before the critical thinking exercises and a short quick start guide before the first chapter begins. Still, the power of the human capacity to believe despite evidence may prove Feder wrong—even today near where I live in Tucson, Arizona, residents of Sedona, Arizona believe in the healing power of the red rocks and "magical" vortices. Considering that Feder spends most of his time in Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries outlining how "we believe what we want to believe" despite evidence to the contrary, Semmelweis' own story would have been a powerful demonstration of how even the scientific community sometimes refuses to believe in factual evidence. Stephanie Vie is a PhD candidate in the Rhetoric, Composition, and Teaching of English program at the University of Arizona in Tucson. However, the Giant was widely famous before it was discredited; many people were apparently taken in, believing the remains were actually the petrified carcass of a prehistoric man. Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries remains a useful addition to the field of archaeology and a potentially helpful text for courses with a rhetorical basis (this textbook would be excellent for a unit on evaluating evidence, analyzing claims, and presenting an argument). The giant, rumored to be the fossilized remains of a prehistoric man discovered in Cardiff, New York, in 1869, was actually a fairly elaborate gypsum fake—and a fairly lucrative fake at that, bringing in millions of dollars by today's standards (p. Tackling well-known examples in popular culture such as the lost city of Atlantis, Columbus' discovery of America, Noah's Ark, and water dowsing, Feder devotes a chapter to each myth to shed light on "unsubstantiated, occult, and speculative claims" (1991, p. 331). 286) in 2006, attacking the strength of their evidence rather than their character—a crucial rhetorical shift. Of true arche Michael Shermer mentioned this book in his Why People Believe Weird Things, and I was curious of enough to read it. Though I am a professional archaeologist with more than thirty years of experience excavating, analyzing, and writing about the human past, I continue to be awestruck when I am in the presence of the remnants of antiquity." Which is why he dismantles the lunacies and brings to a general audience the frauds perpetrated by enterprising hoaxers. However, Feder clearly believes in setting the record straight by providing evidence to prove accepted myths wrong. One of the few reasons Shermer gave at the end of his book, the only one that made any sense to me, was "because they want to". Ultimately, then, we get the past we deserve. The first edition of this work was not specifically marketed as a textbook, though the writing was engaging enough and the complexity level of the writing was certainly not above the average college student's grasp. Though Feder systematically uses each chapter to debunk a single fraud or myth (except for the second-to-last chapter, which deals with three separate religious myths), his goal for the book "is not to simply debunk individual claims ... Her research interests include the ethics of peer-to-peer networking systems, intellectual property, and plagiarism; memetic theory and the spread of urban legends; and feminist and qualitative research. (And, much like the rigorous collection of evidence that Feder points to as necessary to expose myths and mysteries, instructors who wish to accuse a student of plagiarism must often collect enough evidence to prove their case, often using plagiarism detection services and the like.) Like accepting frauds because it is easier than potentially overturning already-entrenched belief systems, it is often easier to turn a blind eye to plagiarism than to challenge suspicious writing. Feder points out a truism applicable to all fields of inquiry and particularly pertinent for writing instructors. As well, it is an interesting read for anyone who wants to know more (albeit in brief) about many captivating strands of misinformation in our culture. Michael Shermer mentioned this book in his Why People Believe Weird Things, and I was curious of enough to read it. And unfortunately, religion has also played a significant role in archaeological fraud. Whether out of naïveté, a refusal to accept that individuals might purposefully trick one another, or because it is more comfortable to believe a lie (p. These factors are all offered to encourage students to consider whether they have sufficient evidence to make an informed decision about issues. While "believing because we want to believe" is a major theme throughout the book, a second theme emerges in chapter two and runs throughout the book as well. "The techniques used to get at knowledge we can feel confident in—knowledge that is reliable, truthful, and factual—are referred to as science. We deserve better and can do better than weave a past from the whole cloth of fantasy and fiction. ...more Loading PreviewSorry, preview is currently unavailable, a useful lie, a helpful lie, such lies would not be against God; he would accept them" Some just romanticize the past that never was, and then there are the plain old nut jobs. To uncover frauds, science plays a big role. Feder offers critical thinking exercises after each chapter, and answers frequently asked questions in a summary. He methodically describes how scientists understand the world through the inductive and deductive processes using examples such as childbed fever in Vienna in the late nineteenth century. [2] Feder's goal is to provide the uninitiated reader with an understanding of the scientific method (testing hypotheses, deducing implications, and using experiments to uphold scientific theories) so they will understand why chapters three through twelve follow the same general format: outline the fraud or myth; show, using scientific evidence, the falsity of the claim(s); and provide "current perspectives" on the issue along with frequently asked questions from students. As a rhetorician, I find Feder's occasionally invective tone off-putting; particularly in the 1991 edition, his tone often slides dangerously close to an ad hominem attack. Notes 1. Feder outlines the process of Semmelweis' discovery but does not address the fact that few in the medical community initially believed in his assertions. Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries, now in its fifth edition. [1] is an engaging introduction to many famous archaeological hoaxes. As a college writing instructor, I have found myself in the past wanting to believe that a suspicious paper was not plagiarized, not all of these constructed pasts—not all of the possibilities—are equally plausible" (p. [this scene] reflects actual claims made on a number of occasions by self-styled scientists" (2006, p. Whether this is good or bad depends on individual perspective and need, of course—for instance, the reader should question whether this book is intended for use in a class or as an academic resource. Finally, throughout the book students are presented with additional research sources, such as a list on page 13 of "skeptical publications on extreme claims not directly related to archaeology" covering topics like astrology, the Bermuda triangle, faith healing and miracles, Holocaust denial, UFOs, and urban legends. On the contrary, during the process of the growth of knowledge and understanding, science is often wrong. "Feder even tells prospective con artists the "Rules for a Successful Archeological Hoax" (not really...these are just some of the downfalls when a hoax is unveiled)- Give the people what they want - A hoax works best when the public has a predisposition to accept it in the first place. from our students"), but Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries is useful reading for anyone who wants to learn more about how misinformation is propagated throughout societies. Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries is organized in an easy-to-follow, one-topic-per-chapter format. To set up this perspective from the beginning, the author begins by relating his own personal trajectory of interest in this project, then systematically explains epistemological reasoning in the second chapter. "Epistemology: How You Know What You Know." Feder rather quickly moves away from epistemology to a more basic understanding of the scientific method. Chapter eleven mostly proceeds along the same formula that guides the previous chapters—introduce the fraud, provide scientific evidence of the deception, and give a current perspective on historical events—but the author intermittently sidesteps the issue at hand to deliver comments like these: Many creationists believe that dinosaurs lived during Noah's time and were among the animals saved on the Ark (Taylor 1965a). The Cardiff Giant myth was dispelled after skeptics proved it was made from gypsum, a soft stone that would have broken down in the soil long before the "discovery" of the supposed petrified man. So why commit the frauds? 285) Sarcasm regarding dinosaurs aside, Feder provides sufficient scientific evidence to prove his point in this chapter, even going so far as to turn to biblical references when it serves his purpose (such as pointing out on page 301 that there are no mentions of a mysterious image on Christ's burial shroud anywhere in the Gospels). Feder goes on to argue that "self-styled scientists" who believe in artifacts like the Shroud of Turin have essentially stepped over into the realm of archaeological debate and are therefore subject to available scientific tests: Although the purpose of this book is certainly not to assess the veracity of anyone's religious beliefs or to judge the philosophical basis of anyone's faith, when individuals claim that there is physical, archaeological evidence for a basic belief of a particular religion, the argument is removed from the field of theological discourse and placed squarely within the proper boundaries of archaeological discussion. the aim here is to put the analysis of such claims firmly within the perspective of the scientific method as it relates to archaeology" (vi). However, the fifth edition now leaves no doubt as to its purpose; many changes make the book more classroom-friendly, such as the addition of short critical thinking exercises at each chapter's end and a companion website for educational use. The book's undercurrent of religious skepticism comes to a head in chapter eleven, "Old Time Religion—New Age Harmonics." In the 1991 edition, Feder begins by likening scientific belief in religious artifacts to an Indiana Jones movie: Indiana Jones did manage to recover the Ark of the Covenant—the receptacle for God's word as described in the Old Testament—from the Nazi band that wished to control the enormous power contained within. 5) and "highly speculative and unproven or, at worst, complete nonsense" (2006, p. Feder tackles the division between science and theology, two areas that "are often forced to part company and respectfully disagree" (p. Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries ends with "Real Mysteries of a Verifiable Past, where Feder outlines the mysteries of European cave painters, Mayan civilization and its collapse, Stonehenge, and crop circles. The fifth edition seems more solidly in the "textbook" camp and indeed, Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries is a popular choice in many introductory archaeology and anthropology courses. He also looks at the nonsense explanations of the like of Erich von Däniken's, who can't seem to understand simple ingenuity and would rather posit ancient aliens visiting and building pyramids and other constructions. 10). McGraw-Hill, 2001: 352 pages, 278). I wanted to believe that no student I taught would ever possibly plagiarize. Many religions have their roots in remote antiquity. The companion website offered at < showcases a companion video guide (a seven-page summary of videos related to the topics covered in the book), the URLs for websites highlighted in the book's brief "best of the Web" notes, and quizzes. ... These additional sources enhance the material provided by Feder to give a broader perspective of a field often colloquially referred to as "myth-busting." Although all these changes certainly make Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries a better textbook, they do detract a bit from the more scholarly nature of the first edition. Because the author only briefly assesses many different hoaxes over the course of nearly four hundred pages, this book seems best suited to an introductory college-level reader. Feder addresses the concepts of authenticity and belief in the brief "current perspectives" section at the end of chapter three.

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