

[PDF] Voodoo Science: The Road From Foolishness To Fraud

Robert L. Park - pdf download free book



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Author: Robert L. Park

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Description:

Scientific error, says Robert Park, "has a way of evolving ... from self-delusion to fraud. I use the term voodoo science to cover them all: pathological science, junk science, pseudoscience, and fraudulent science." In pathological science, scientists fool themselves. Junk science refers to scientists who use their expertise to befuddle and mislead others (usually juries or lawmakers). Pseudoscience has the trappings of science without any evidence. Fraudulent science is, well, fraud--old-fashioned lying.

Park is well-acquainted with voodoo science in all its forms. Since 1982, he has headed the Washington, D.C., office of the American Physical Society, and he has carried the flag for scientific rationality through cold fusion, homeopathy, "Star Wars," quantum healing, and sundry attempts to repeal the laws of thermodynamics. Park shows why a "disproportionate share of the science seen by the public is flawed" (because shaky science is more likely to skip past peer review and head straight for the media), and he gives a good tour of recent highlights in *Voodoo*. He has a rare ability to poke holes compassionately, without excoriating those taken in by their fondest wishes. Park is less forgiving of scientists (especially Edward Teller) when he thinks they've fallen down on the job, a job that should include helping the public separate the scientific wheat from the voodoo chaff. --*Mary Ellen Curtin* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Review

"Robert Park, in these 10 well-written essays for a lay audience, uses pathological science as a starting point for far-reaching discussions of science and society. Park is an articulate and skeptical voice of reason about science." -- Kenneth R. Foster, *Science*

"Few books have had the impact on my thinking of Charles Mackay's *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, published more than 150 years ago. It taught me that massive numbers of individuals have fallen victim to bizarre manias. Professor Park's *Voodoo Science* teaches us that, even in this age of science, it is still happening. My enthusiasm for this book leads me to recommend it, without reservation, to the intellectual community and The Rest of Us. Long life to Robert Park and his fellow thinkers who, sometimes with little profit to themselves, are so willing and able to lead us out of what I call 'dumbth.'"--Steve Allen, author and TV personality

"I would like to make this book compulsory reading for medical students in their first year ... With brilliant insight and clarity of prose, [Park] describes the inevitable consequences of a debate between the true believer and sceptics ... This book was a joy and an entertainment."--*Healthwatch Newsletter*

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